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OF THE

BAPTIST GENERAL TRACT SOCIETY.

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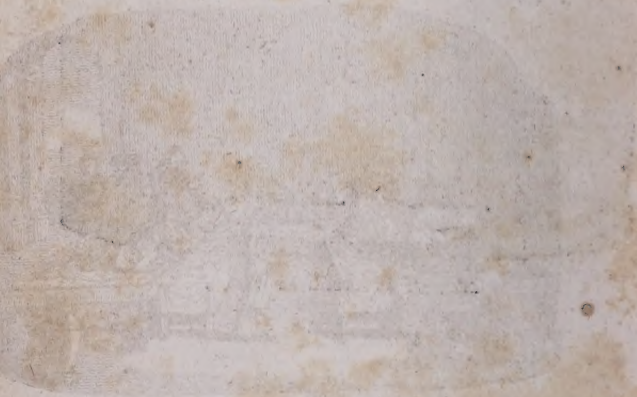

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No. 1

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

MEMORABLE THOUGHTS,

From a Pastor's Commonplace-Book.

EXPERIMENTAL RELIGION.

1. True religion is rather a divine life, than divine knowledge; consists more in holy affections than in refined theories, and they generally have the best insight into the truth of Scripture, who bring their conduct and all their conversation to the test of the word—"If any man shall do his will, he shall know the doctrine." No man can be convinced well and wisely of the article of the holy, blessed, and undivided Trinity, but he that feels the mightiness of the Father begetting him to a new life, the wisdom of the Son building him up in a most holy faith, and the love of the Spirit of God making him become like unto God.

2. He that has passed from his childhood in grace, and is gone forward to be a young man in Christ, strong and vigorous in holy actions and holy undertakings, and from thence is become an old disciple, and has grown old in the conversation of the spirit; this man best understands the secret and undiscernible economy; he *feels* this unintelligible mystery, and sees with his heart what his tongue can never express, and what his reason can never prove.

3. In this case experience is the best learning, and Christianity is the best institution, and the Spirit of God is the best teacher, and holiness is the greatest wisdom, and the humble and obedient man is the best scholar.

4. God is the Lord of all creatures; they are but as his several moneys; he coined them all. So much then of his image as any creature hath in it, so much value and worth it carries. In his creation we find man made after the similitude of God, and in his restoration we find God made after the similitude of man, and man once again after the similitude of God.

5. As the most vivid flash of lightning appears on the face of the darkest cloud, so the brightest beam of mercy usually shines on the darkest hour and the deepest gloom of the true penitent. "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier the myrtle tree, and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign which shall not be cut off." The sweet shrubs in nature's garden have this remarkable quality, that the more they are crushed and bruised, the sweeter is the fragrance they give forth. So it is with the pious soul under God's experimental probation. Like the fragrant myrtle, the more he is pressed down with soul-affliction, the more sweetly does he savour the things that be of God.

6. To the spirit, under the lively actings of experimental religion, Christ appears like the circle in geometry, beginning every where and ending no where. "He is all and in all." Experience is not the work of a day or a month, but of life. It is the key of life, which pervades and unlocks all the hidden and intricate wards of existence, which opens to us the door into the mysterious structure of Providence, which developes the hidden springs of all our conduct, which unfolds to us the beauty and the richness of Scripture.

7. In the religion of experience, there is a joy unspeakable and full of glory. When we converse with a light greater than the sun, and taste a sweetness more delicious than the dew of heaven, and in our thoughts entertain the transports and harmony of that atonement which reconciles God to man and man to felicity, it may be more easily pardoned, if we should be like persons that admire much and say but little; and indeed we can best confess the glories of the Lord, by dazzled eyes and a stammering tongue, and a heart overcharged with the miracles of this infinity. For so those little drops that *run over*, though they be not much in themselves, yet they tell that the vessel was full, and could express the greatness of the shower no otherwise but by spilling, and inartificial expressions and runnings over.

8. The light of true piety cannot be shut up within our own hearts, for that would be like shutting in the sun. He that shuts him in, shuts him out.

9. The heart which is exercised by the experiences of uncorrupt religion, like the eye, is pained by the admission of any thing foreign to its nature. For as this tender organ frets and weeps incessantly, until the offending matter is removed, so the susceptible conscience feels, with acute sorrow, the pressure of unpardoned and unrepented sins. It runs over in the flowings of penitence, like the troubled fountain, until the mud and sediment be cleared away.

10. The difference between natural gentleness of disposition and the meekness of the Christian, should be always observed. Some men are very meek and gentle naturally, and think that they serve God withal, because they pursue the virtue of their nature. They tie a stone at the bottom of the well, and that is more than needful. The stone would stay there without that trouble. So it is very easy for men to tie themselves down by commandments which they have no disposition to break, and under the perfect quiescence which they feel, they conclude themselves to be Christians. They are, however, strangers to experience in religion, because the word and Spirit of God have never exerted a joint action upon their hidden corruptions. The amiable young man in the gospel, had applied every test to his heart but the right one.

11. The most experienced Christians are often agitated by trying reverses in their spiritual progress. They often seem, to themselves at least, to lose as much by the declensions of their confidence and zeal, as they had gained before by spiritual conversation and godliness. But so have I seen the returning sea enter upon the strand; and the waters rolling towards the shore, throw up little portions of the tide, and retire, as if nature meant to play, and not to change the abode of waters: but still the flood crept by little steppings, and invaded more by his progressions than he lost by his retreat. So is the progressive meetness of the soul for heaven. Falls and changes, retreats and conflicts, seem to make up the amount of its history, but still it approaches with certainty the destined habitation.

12. Experience lies in the perceptions and desires of a renewed nature.

The things of God are the noblest satisfactions to those

desires which ought to be cherished, and swelled up to infinite. Their deliciousness is vast and full of relish; and their very appendant thorns are to be chosen, for they are gilded, they are safe and medicinal, they heal the wound they make, and bring forth fruit of a blessed and holy life.

13. Patience and suffering are, however, the prevailing features of Christian experience. Paul related an excellent experience, when he said, "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear." The passive virtues of the Christian character are highly important to exemplify the whole truth of God. If Christ suffered so many things only that he might give us glory, shall it be strange that we shall suffer, who are to receive his glory? It is in vain to think that we shall obtain glories at a cheaper rate, than to drink of the brook in the way in which Christ was drenched. When, according to the report, the devil appeared to St. Martin in a bright, splendid shape, and said he was Christ, he answered, "Christ never appears to his people in this life, except upon the cross." And when St. Ignatius was newly tied in a chain, to be led to his martyrdom, he cried out, "Now I begin to be a Christian." Are there any who cannot forego a small advantage to avoid the violation of the Sabbath, who cannot deny the cravings of morbid thirst for the honour of temperance, who quarrel and fret at every little inconvenience and sacrifice which may be found in the path of duty; with what grace would they submit to the honours of martyrdom, and follow their master to his bloody agony?

PRUDENTIAL MAXIMS.

1. The prudence of a Christian does oblige and direct all the children of the institution: that we be wise in choosing our company, reserved and wary in our friendships, and communicative in our charity. That we be silent and retentive of what we hear, and what we think; not credulous, nor inconstant. That we be deliberate in our elections, and vigorous in our prosecutions. That we suffer not good nature to discompose our duty, but that we separate images from substances, and the pleasing of a present company from our religion to God, and our

eternal interest. That we never do a thing of which we know we must repent. That we do not admire too many things, nor any thing too much. That we always look upon the scar we have made in our flesh, and no more handle dangers and knives. That we pardon, and do not observe all the faults either of friends or enemies. Of evils, that we choose the least, and of goods the greatest, if it be also the safest. That we esteem no victory more signal than that which a man gains over himself.

2. The following observations may also be made under this head. That, as the most noisy streams are not always the deepest, so the most clamorous profession is not always most sincere. That, as muddy water always looks deep, so many disputers appear deep, because they are not clear. That honest avocations are in no wise opposed to religion, since a man may have his hands full of mud, and his heart full of Heaven. That the pain of self-denial in performing a good action, soon passes away, and the pleasure remains permanent; but that the pleasure attending an ill act soon vanishes, and leaves the pain of lasting shame and remorse.

3. The maxims upon which a sinful life proceeds are these: Sense is to be preferred before reason, interest before religion, moments before eternity, money above God, and a little in present possession, is better than the certain state of infinite glories hereafter.

If men do not go upon these grounds, upon what account do they sin? Sin has no wiser reasons for itself than these. The same argument that a fly hath to enter into a candle, the same argument the fool hath for entering into sin. It looks prettily, but rewards the eye as burning basins do, with intolerable circles of reflected fire.

4. He that excuses a fault, by telling a lie, believes it better to be guilty of two faults, than to be thought guilty of one. Every hypocrite thinks it not good to be holy, but to be accounted so is a fine thing; that is, that opinion is better than reality, and that there is in virtue nothing good but the fame of it.

5. The man that takes revenge, relies upon this proposition, that the evil he has already suffered grows less, if another suffers the like. That his wound cannot smart,

if he dies who inflicted it. A good man, though unlearned in secular notices, is like the windows of the Temple, narrow without, and broad within; he sees not so much of what profits not abroad, but whatsoever is within, and concerns religion and the glorifications of God, that he sees with a broad inspection. All human learning, without God, is but blindness and folly.

6. We talk much of reformation, and certainly nothing is more desirable. But that is a sad reformation which pulls off the roof and digs down the walls of the house, and disturbs the very foundation.

7. One sin that we choose and love, and delight in, will not be excused by twenty virtues. For as one broken link dissolves the union of the whole chain, and one jarring untuned string spoils the whole music, so is every sin that seizes upon a portion of our affections. Our nature was not made evil but by ourselves; but yet we are naturally evil, that is, by a superinduced nature. Just as drunkards, and intemperate persons have made it necessary to drink extremely, and their nature requires it, and it is health to them; they die without it, because they have made themselves a new constitution. Their sin made this new nature, and this new nature makes sin necessary and unavoidable. So it is in all other instances; our nature is evil, because corrupted. If then we are ever happy, we must have a new nature put into us, which must be the principle of new counsels and better purposes, of holy actions and great devotion. And this nature is derived from God.

8. A good life is the strongest argument of a good faith; the greatest eloquence in the world, is a meek spirit, and a liberal hand. These are the two pastoral staves of which the prophet speaks, *beauty* and *bands*. He that hath a staff of the beauty of holiness, the ornament of fair example, he also hath the staff of bands. He shall draw the people after him by the cords of a man, by the bands of holy charity.

> Sermons take not from men's applause renown;
> The people's practice is the preacher's crown.

9. It is an important duty to honour Christ, by a manifested confidence in his fulness. He honours himself by giving largely. When Perillus, the friend of Alexan-

der, had received fifty talents from him, he exclaimed; ten is sufficient. Said the conquerer, ten might be enough for Perillus to receive, but it is not enough for Alexander to give. We might justly think, that something infinitely short of a perfect salvation and a glorious heaven would be enough for us—and so it would be enough for us to receive, but not enough for Christ to give.

REPENTANCE.

1. How then shall I know, by some infallible token, that I am a true penitent? What, and if I weep for my sins? Will you not then give me leave to conclude that my heart is right with God, and at enmity with sin? It may be so. But there are some friends that weep at parting. And is not thy weeping a sorrow of affection? It is a sad thing to part with our long companion. Or it may be thou weepest because thou wouldst have a sign to cozen thyself withal. Some men are more desirous to have a sign, than the thing signified. They would do something to show their repentance, that themselves may believe themselves to be penitents, having no reason from within to believe so.

2. Can a man pray against his sin, and yet continue the love and practice of it? So did St. Austin; when, in his youth, he was tempted to lust and uncleanness, he prayed against it, and secretly desired that God would not hear him. In this he was mistaken. For no man did ever heartily pray against his sin in the midst of a temptation to it, if he did in any sense or degree listen to the temptation. For to pray against a sin is to have desires contrary to it, and that cannot consist with any love or kindness to it.

3. To repent truly is to die unto sin. Many, however, think their repentance sufficient when they break off the grosser sins of their life; and the repentance of many consists in nothing more than the exchange of one set of sins for another. They seem to have buried in the grave their old favourites; but alas! they continue still to wear their pictures and images about their heart. He certainly is very much in love with sin, and parts with it very unwillingly, that keeps its picture, and wears its favour, and delights in the fancy of it, even with the same desire as

a most passionate widow parts with her dearest husband, even when she can no longer enjoy him. But certainly her gazing all day upon his picture, and weeping over his robe, and wringing her hands over his children, are no great signs that she hated him. And just so do most men hate, and accordingly part with their sins.

4. Confession of sins is in order to forsaking them. But then confession must not be like the unlading of a ship, to take in a new cargo. Nor should it resemble the *bleating of the calves, and the lowing of the oxen*, which Saul reserved after the spoil of Agag; which proclaims the sin, but does nothing towards its cure.

5. Repentance glorifies God. For if God is glorified in the sun and moon—in the rare fabric of the honeycomb, and in the discipline of bees; in the little houses of the birds, and in the curiosity of an eye; much rather will he be pleased to behold himself in the glasses of our obedience, in the emanations of our will and understanding.

HOLY RESOLUTIONS

To be made in the strength of the Lord.

1. I will regard the favour and everlasting enjoyment of God, as the end of all my plans, and study to make the consideration of them influence, as much as possible, the minutest actions of my life.

2. I will regard the obedience, sacrifice, mediation and intercession of Christ, as the only procuring cause of all those blessings which conduce to that end; as the pardon of sin, peace with God, and the sanctifying influences of the Spirit.

3. I will continually keep in mind my obligation to walk in Christ's steps, and to be holy, as he is holy; and I will ever pray for the Spirit of God, in the firm belief that through his operation alone this holy frame can be produced.

4. I will cultivate an habitual sense of God's presence, and of my accountableness to him; of the shortness of time, and of my obligation to improve it.

5. I will study, for the future, to appear well, not so I.

much in the sight of man as in that of God, and to that end will be particularly watchful against the love of human praise or distinction, and the fear of shame; desisting from my purpose when I feel these to be my only motives, and endeavouring by prayer to overcome them, when I perceive them to mix with such as are more pure.

6. I will consider love to God and zeal for his glory as my highest duties, and will study to improve daily in these divine affections; and I will judge of my progress in them not by transient fervours of the mind, but by my habitual tempers, by my punctual performance of the self-denying duties of Christianity, by my cheerful acquiescence in all God's dispensations, and by the love, humility, and meekness which I am enabled to exercise towards those around me.

7. I will study to live a life of dependence on Christ, and of faith in his word, making it the sole and exclusive measure of my belief and practice.

8. I will particularly endeavour to restrain all wanderings of the mind, in the public and private exercises of God's worship; to banish, as much as I can, vain and worldly conversation, and vain and worldly thoughts from my mind and lips on the Lord's day; and to give all my household the time requisite for hallowing it.

9. I will guard against formality and vanity, especially in family worship; and will fit myself, by previous reflection and prayer, for its due performance.

10. I will be particularly guarded against the intrusion of impure thoughts: I will turn away my eyes from beholding what might lead to them; shut my ears against polluting conversation, and restrain my tongue from every licentious word; and I will carefully avoid every circumstance which I know formerly to have excited improper feelings, and forbid my thoughts to dwell a moment on past scenes of sensual pleasure.

11. I will watch against every rising of covetous desire; and while I carefully repress all tendency to improper expense, or the careless profusion of any of God's gifts, I will seek out proper objects with whom to share those good things of which God has made me steward, and of which he will require an account. I will ask every night, whose distresses I have this day relieved?

12. I will no longer put off to a future day, or leave the business of the present day or hour, but will apply myself to it, deny myself to sloth and the love of ease, and exercise a constant and self-denying attention to what is my proper work.

13. I will keep truth inviolate, in the smallest, as well as in the greatest matters.

14. I will in no case pretend to knowledge which I have not.

15. I will endeavour to cultivate a temper of more benignity towards all; and I will attend more to the outward expression of love and kindness, never allowing passion to dictate what I may say, but studying to act by others as I could reasonably wish to be dealt with.

16. I will not allow the ill conduct of others towards me, to lessen my kindness and good will towards them.

17. I will, from this time forward, when not hindered by unavoidable circumstances, regularly devote, at least, one half hour in the morning, and one half hour in the evening, exclusively to those concerns which lie between God and my soul.

18. I will every day make the attainment of purity, humility, meekness, lowliness of heart, activity, watchfulness, calmness of mind, kindness of manner, sincerity and spiritual mindedness, being graces in which I conceive myself more particularly defective, the subject of earnest and special supplication at the throne of grace.

19. I will consider the study of my heart as one main business of my life; and will therefore watch its operations under the various trials of life.

20. I resolve to begin and end every work with God; to begin, conduct, and close every day with him; to be careful to please him, and fearful lest I offend him.

21. For the improvement of my memory, I will accustom myself to bestow strict attention upon all I read or hear. I will consider a bad memory the effect of bad attention, and will therefore apply *attention*, to improve *retention*.

22. I will examine my *yesterdays*, and see whether they look back upon me with smiles or frowns. I will look for to-morrow, without throwing into it the duties of to-day.

23. I resolve carefully to examine the motives of all my conduct, but especially the reasons by which I am governed in the performance of religious duties; to ascertain, if possible, whether it be habit, or holiness, the love of human or of divine praise, the mere acquitting myself of a present obligation, or the pleasure arising from its performance, that sways my actions.

SELF-EXAMINATION.

1. Do I not feel much self-complacence after the regular performance of private devotion; and when the services of the closet are over, do I not too often feel that a burden has been taken off of me, rather than that I had enjoyed a happy privilege?

2. What reason have I to believe myself a Christian? Is it because I have made a public profession, and have confirmed that profession by baptism, and have taken my place among the avowed friends of Christ, and have assumed the decent garb of visible religion? Or is it because I love my family and friends, abstain from quarrelling with my enemies, profess to have experimental religion, and enjoy many privileges? In this, what do I more than others?

3. Do I form my daily conduct upon resolutions and purposes previously fixed, so that I know beforehand what I intend to do on each day, God willing; or do I leave my whole life to run on in the random current of circumstances, doing only that which a present accident or an unexpected occasion may suggest?

4. Do I find the religion which I profess a source of such joy to me that I could be happy in it, though shut out from the enjoyment of every thing else?

If the heavens were made as brass, and the earth iron, and all the pleasant fruits of nature cut off, still could I rejoice in the Lord?

5. Is the love of God the chief ingredient in my present happiness, and does it form the chief delight of my expected heaven?

HYMN.

1.

Whilst thee I seek, protecting Power!
Be my vain wishes still'd;
And may this consecrated hour
With better hopes be fill'd.

2.

Thy love the power of thought bestow'd;
To thee my thoughts would soar,—
Thy mercy o'er my life has flow'd;
That mercy I adore.

3.

In each event of life, how clear
Thy ruling hand I see!
Each blessing to my soul most dear,
Because conferr'd by thee.

4.

In every joy that crowns my days,
In every pain I bear,
My heart shall find delight in praise,
Or seek relief in pray'r.

5.

When gladness wings my favour'd hour,
Thy love my thoughts shall fill;
Resign'd, when storms of sorrow low'r
My soul shall meet thy will.

6.

My lifted eye, without a tear,
The gathering storm shall see;
My steadfast heart shall know no fear,
That heart shall rest on thee.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

No. 2.

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

DWIGHT'S DISCOURSE ON DRUNKENNESS.

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess.—Ephes. v. 18.

Drunkenness is nearly allied to Suicide. It is equally certain means of shortening life. The principal difference, so far as the termination of life is concerned, lies in the mode. What is appropriately called Suicide, is a *sudden, or immediate termination of life.* Drunkenness brings it *gradually* to an end. The destruction, in both cases, is equally certain; and not materially different in the degree of turpitude. In many instances, indeed, this catastrophe is brought to pass at least as suddenly by drunkenness, as by suicide. There is, also, another difference between these crimes. The Suicide intends directly to destroy his life, and makes this his prime purpose. The Drunkard thinks of nothing less. The prime object in his view is the gratification of his relish for strong drink, united with that bewildered elevation of spirits, which he feels in the hour of intoxication.

In the text we are expressly, and universally, forbidden to commit this sin. The penalty, incurred by the commission, is as expressly declared in 1 Cor. vi. 10; where it is said, that *Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God.* This threatening we are not indeed to consider as absolute, any more than others expressed in a similar manner. Undoubtedly, no person, who enters eternity in the character of a drunkard, will *inherit the kingdom of God.* But I know of no reason to conclude, that he, who though once a drunkard, has become a penitent, will not be accepted.

This interesting subject I design to consider at large under the following heads.

I. *The Nature;* II. *The Causes;* III. *The Evils; of Drunkenness;* and IV. *The Means; of avoiding it.*

I. *I shall make a few observations concerning the nature of this sin.*

Drunkenness is that singular state of man, in which he loses, either partially, or wholly, the use of his bodily and mental powers, under the operations of spirituous drink, opium, or other means of intoxication.

Drunkenness is either *occasional*, or *habitual*.

Occasional Drunkenness exists in irregular, separate, solitary, or even single instances; and is produced sometimes by design, and sometimes by accident.

Habitual Drunkenness is a frequent, and usually a regular, intoxication; occasioned by that increased and peculiar love of strong drink, which is generated by occasional drunkenness.

Habitual Drunkenness will be the principal subject of this discourse. It will only be necessary to remark concerning Occasional Drunkenness, that all observations, almost, concerning Habitual Drunkenness, will be applicable to it, although in an inferior degree; and that, wherever the subject shall appear to demand any serious discriminations, I shall endeavour to make them in the progress of the discussion.

II. *The causes of this Sin*, by which I intend not the immediate, and properly efficient, causes; such as those already mentioned: but those, which, although more remote, are yet deeply concerned in the production of it; are principally *the following*.

1. *Example.*

By this I intend, that we gradually acquire a habit of Drunkenness, by seeing others drink; and, if I may be allowed the expression, catching the practice merely from the fact, that we often witness it in others. Wherever the character of those, who set the example, is the object of particular affection, esteem, or reverence, the influence of the example becomes proportionally great and dangerous. Parents, in this manner, become peculiarly, and other relations and friends generally, powerful means of seduction and ruin to their children, and other relatives. In this case I suppose nothing but the example, and the veneration, and corruption of those, to whom it is exhibited.

2. *Frequenting those places where strong drink is conveniently obtained.*

A tavern, especially a vulgar one, or a dram-shop, or an alehouse, newly opened, usually exhibits strongly, as well

as clearly, the efficacy of this cause. Each of them soon begins to attract its train of drinking customers; and within a moderate period becomes surrounded by its circle of drunkards. There is scarcely a greater nuisance to society, than houses of this nature; in which spirituous liquors are sold in small quantities, to the neighbouring inhabitants. Millions of the human race have in these baleful haunts taken the first fatal step towards perdition.

3. *Evil Companions.*

These usually combine all the efficacy of the former causes, with many additional temptations. They present *the example:* they provide *the retreat*, and *the convenience.* At the same time, they add to these the force of direct and powerful solicitations; the sprightliness of wit; the gayety of sports, and songs; the pungency of ridicule; the influence of good nature and affection; and the power of that sympathy, which is always found in social festivity. Such a combination is too powerful to be resisted by common minds; perhaps by any mind, which is voluntarily, for any length of time, within its reach. He who frequents the society of jovial companions in an habitual manner may fairly consider himself as destined, in the end, to become a sot.

4. *Customary and regular drinking.*

Multitudes of persons accustom themselves to take a moderate quantity of strong drink, day by day, at regular periods: in the morning, immediately before dinner, or in the evening. Labouring men, in this country, are, to a great extent, accustomed to use ardent spirits at certain given times of the day; considering them as necessary to recruit their strength, which is supposed to be wasted by their toil. Some of them, less attentive to particular times of drinking, demand stated quantities of strong drink, which they regard as indispensable to enable them to pursue their daily labour. Men of wealth and fashion, with nearly the same regularity, consume large quantities of wine at, and after dinner. In these, and in all other cases of regular drinking, an habitual attachment to strong drink is begun, strengthened, and confirmed. *The man, who drinks spirits regularly, ought to consider himself as having already entered the path of habitual intoxication.*

5. *Affliction, also, is not unfrequently, a cause of Drunkenness.*

The affliction, here referred to, is both bodily and mental. Certain diseases of the body, it is well known, bring with them lowness of spirits, discouragement and melancholy. The patient oftentimes resorts to the use of strong drink, as a remedy for these evils; and finds in it a temporary relief from the pressure. Oftentimes the physician prescribes this remedy in form; and thus adds the sanction of his skill, and character, to the patient's inclination. In every case of this nature, a degree of pain is usually experienced in that part of the stomach, which is sometimes called the "*Second Sensory.*" This is commonly relieved, at least in some degree, by the use of strong drink, taken, at first, in moderate quantities. The remedy, however, leaves the disease worse than it found it. To produce the desired effect, a greater quantity is soon necessary; and then a greater still. In this manner multitudes of persons become drunkards.

The mental evils, which give birth to this unhappy habit, are numerous. Most, or all, of them, however, are such, as, instead of exciting, waste, or destroy, the energy of the mind. Of this nature are a strong sense of irretrievable disgrace; a painful consciousness of perplexed, or desperate circumstances; merited loss of esteem and affection, highly valued by ourselves; long-continued suspense concerning some important interest; final discouragement of ardent wishes, or favourite pursuits; together with several other very anxious, and hopeless situations of the mind. From the distress, suffered in these and the like cases, it often betakes itself to spirituous liquors. The relief is necessarily transient; and, in order to be enjoyed to any great extent, must, therefore, be often repeated. By this repetition the sufferer soon becomes of course habitually intemperate.

6. *A small number of persons find a cause of Drunkenness in an original native appetite for strong drink.*

The number of these is so small, and the cause itself so little needs explanation, that it is unnecessary to dwell on this part of the subject.

III. *The principal evils of Drunkenness are the following:*

1. *It exhibits the subject of it in the light of extreme odiousness and degradation.*

Drunkenness always deprives a man, either partially or

wholly of his reason; and very often of his bodily faculties. A man without reason is either a maniac, or a brute; and, for the time, presents the eye with a spectacle, more sunk than the brute, and more painful than the maniac. The loss of reason is, to man, the loss of all, which renders him either comfortable, respectable, or useful. How painful, how humiliating, is the sight of an Idiot! How excruciating the appearance of a Lunatic! How lowering to human pride and independence, to sober contemplation, and real dignity, a respectable man, transformed, by age or sickness, into a Driveller! Such a transformation the drunkard accomplishes for himself, during every period of his intoxication; and adds to all the other circumstances of degradation the peculiarly humbling and hateful one, that he has voluntarily degraded himself.

In this situation the Drunkard becomes, in the literal and most emphatical sense, a fool. His conversation is that of a tongue, vibrating without a mind; moving, because it has been accustomed to move; lisping and babbling an imperfect, cluttered, and dragging articulation: a kind of instinctive effort, resembling that of the Idiot, who, having learned to count the strokes of a clock, continued to count after the clock had ceased to go.

In the mean time, many drunkards, who partially lose their reason, set their passions on fire. All restraints, in this case, vanish with their reason. The mind becomes a furnace of frenzy; and employed only as the instruments of rage and violence. In the former case, the man sunk down to the level of a Swine. In this, he converts himself into a Tiger. In the former case, he became loathsome and despicable. In this, he becomes equally the object of hatred and terror.

There is, however, a stage in the progress of both, at which they lose alike, and absolutely, the powers of both body and mind. Each of them becomes absolutely stupid: a mass of flesh, in which a soul once lived, thought, animated, and controlled; but from which it has fled, indignant at the brutal abuse, which it has suffered. It has become palsied, lifeless, and for the period, extinct, under a shock which it was unable to sustain.

2. *Drunkenness exposes the subject of it to many, and those often extreme dangers.*

The drunkard is always exposed to be overreached, and defrauded, during the seasons of his partial insanity. At these seasons, many persons, devoted to the use of strong drink, are peculiarly inclined to manage business, and make bargains. The weakness, the want of self-control, and the incapacity of forming just estimates of men and things, always visible at these seasons in such men, mark them out as prey for the cheat and the sharper. Accordingly they often take such measures, to produce in them such a degree of intoxication, as they well know will effectually answer their own purposes. Without any such preconcertion, there are, however, always sharpers enough, ready to arrest the drunkard in his intoxication, and drunkards enough to furnish them with victims. At almost all such periods, the losses incurred are material, frequently they are great; and sometimes they are fatal.

At other seasons, when the intoxication is complete, the subject of it is exposed to extreme personal dangers. Few men, in this situation, are aware, so long as they retain a partial use of their limbs, and some faint glimmerings of understanding, how incompetent they have become to direct their own conduct with safety. Of course, they venture without apprehension into such situations, as demand the full exercise of their bodily and mental powers. Hence one of them has fallen from his horse; and broken his limbs, or his neck. Another has fallen into the fire; and either terminated his life, or made himself through the remainder of it a miserable cripple. A third has lost himself in a wintry storm; and perished, because he could not find the way to his own house. A fourth has fallen overboard, and been drowned. A fifth has killed himself by swallowing a larger quantity of ardent spirits, than he was aware, or than his nature could sustain. By these, and many other accidents, to some or other of which the drunkard is almost always exposed, multitudes have come to an untimely end.

Nor is the danger much less to the intoxicated person of doing, without any design, and even in contradiction to his prevailing wishes, serious injuries to those around him. Not a small number of dwelling-houses have been consumed by these undesigning incendiaries. In the conflagration, the inhabitants, whoever they may have been,

most frequently his family, and perhaps as frequently the drunkard himself, have perished. Who that has the least share of sober reflection, or common sense, left, would not tremble at the first approach towards this terrible catastrophe?

3. *The Drunkard exposes himself to many temptations, and many sins.*

Of this nature, indeed, are all those things, which have been mentioned under the preceding heads. But, beside these evils, the use of spirituous liquors produces many others. It excites to a high degree of intenseness most of the vehement passions of man; particularly anger and lust. As the government of reason is lost, and the power of conscience laid asleep; the passions, at all times sufficiently strong, assume, with increased strength, the absolute control of the man; and spur and goad him on to every crime within his reach. In this situation, it is to be remembered, he is rarely alone. Other drunkards are usually around him; whose reason is equally enfeebled, and whose passions are equally awake. Among men of strong passions, and little reason, disputes cannot fail to arise. In such men disputes generate anger of course. Anger, here, regularly issues in quarrelling; and quarrelling terminates in maimed limbs, bloodshed, and death. A large part of the murders, which have existed in this world, have grown out of intoxication.

4. *A Drunkard necessarily wastes his own Property.*

This he often does, as I have already observed, by the foolish and mischievous bargains, which he makes during the hours of intoxication. But this is far from being all. In the mere purchase of strong drink he expends greater sums, than any man, without an arithmetical calculation, would suspect; and obviously greater, than moderate property can bear.

Nor is this all. A great part of his time is spent in preparing the means of intoxication; in the haunts, to which he resorts for it; among his drinking companions; and in sleeping, and wearing off, its immediate effects. All this time would, otherwise, have been employed in useful business; and would have thus been the means of increasing instead of diminishing his property.

Nor is he less a sufferer by that gradual diminution of

bodily and mental powers mentioned above. His frame and limbs, are of course diseased. In this manner he becomes, at times, disabled from pursuing his business at all; and, at other times, obliged to pursue it to very little purpose. What he does in this situation is but half done; and would often have been as well or much better omitted. His judgment also, and skill, are equally impaired; and, instead of directing his business with success, are wasted on feeble, fruitless plans, miserably executed. As these powers decay, he becomes careless, listless, and negligent of his concerns; and sees them continually declining, and himself daily approaching towards beggary, without either the power, or the will, to stay the deplorable progress.

Thus he voluntarily robs himself of a comfortable support in old age, and in the sickness, to which he is eminently exposed; and, at an untimely period, withers the power, and wastes the means of enjoyment.

5. *The Drunkard destroys his Health.*

No constitution is able to resist the scorching efficacy of that liquid fire, which this slave of sense and sin incessantly swallows. Pain, sorrow, and disease, are its inevitable effects. The stomach becomes speedily too much weakened to receive, and the appetite to relish food; until both have been stimulated by a new draught. Speedily, the limbs complain, and decay; the senses become obtuse; and all the energy of the body gradually wastes away.

In this situation, also, the skill of the Physician, and the power of Medicine are rendered useless. A large proportion of all the useful medicines, those, particularly, which the diseases of drinking men chiefly demand, are stimulants. But these men have used one of the most powerful of all stimulants so often, and so long, that medicines of this nature cease to operate upon their constitutions with their proper sensitive power. They are left therefore, in a peculiar degree, to the ravages, and sufferings of disease, without the usual means of cure, alleviation, or hope.

6. *The Drunkard wastes his Reputation.*

A good name is better than great riches. It would be no small consolation, therefore, to a man of this description, under the loss of his property and his health, if he could at the same time preserve his character. But un-

happily for him, his reputation is squandered faster than his property, and destroyed more suddenly than his health. Drunkenness is a sin, which, after it has once become habitual, is so rarely relinquished, as hardly to admit the feeblest hope of reformation. In a very early part of his progress, therefore, he becomes branded with the full and entire character of a *Drunkard*. His reputation, of course, is lost at an untimely period; and his infamy is of a premature growth. But what character can be more degrading, more indicative of the loss of virtue, and common sense, and the voluntary assumption of folly and self-pollution? What name is more scandalous; more evidential, that a man has left his proper rank in the creation, and sunk himself down to the level of brutes; than that of a *sot?* But on this reputation, thus wantonly and profligately wasted, hangs almost all the comfort and usefulness of men. To preserve it fresh and untainted, therefore, is alike their interest and their duty: a duty indispensable; an interest which cannot be estimated. He who does not highly value it, is a fool. He who wantonly throws it away, is a madman.

7. *The Drunkard destroys his Reason.*

Reason has been often, and justly, styled "*the light of the mind.*" Mr. Locke with great force and beauty styles it "*the candle of the Lord, shining within man.*" It is our only ultimate directress. Even the doctrines and precepts of Revelation can be nothing to us, until Reason has first discerned it to be a Revelation; and determined the real import of its precepts and doctrines. Still more absolutely is it the arbiter of all our ordinary concerns. For these we have no other guide, and can submit them to no other control. In a word, Reason makes us men; and without it we should be brutes.

But this invaluable possession, this essence of his character as a human being, himself, his all, the drunkard rapidly wastes away.

8. *The Drunkard destroys his Usefulness.*

This evil is dreadfully involved in the loss of his property, health, reputation, and reason. The perpetual degradation, with which he daily appears to the eyes of those around him, not only forbids the esteem and confidence which are indispensable to the attainment of useful busi-

ness; but renders him an object of abhorrence and loathing. Thus, without reputation to recommend him to others, or property, or even inclination, to befriend them; with health and reason so decayed, as to be unable to befriend himself; he ceases to be of any serious use to either. Of course, he becomes a burden, a nuisance, a calamity, to the world. *Good would it have been for this man, if he had never been born.*

In the mean time, sunk and lost as he is, he continues, and usually for a length of time, to be a merry and jovial haunter of taverns and dram-shops; and like a vessel of various matter occasionally opened, spreads, from day to day, a pestilential contagion through the clusters of miserable wretches, who frequent these dangerous resorts. Few men injure a community more dreadfully than a drunkard. The sin, which peculiarly constitutes his character, is almost wholly derived from example. Every such example therefore, is the real cause of extending the evil to succeeding generations, as well as of corrupting his contemporaries. Were the injuries of mankind to receive their real deserts, Newgate would exchange many of its present tenants for the mischievous slaves of strong drink.

9. *The Drunkard ruins his Family.*

In this comprehensive and affecting article, several particulars merit the most serious consideration.

First. *He spreads through his family the habit of Intoxication.*

The influence of parental example, especially when an evil example, I have already had occasion particularly to unfold. In the present melancholy case, all the power of such an example is felt to the utmost. It is an example seen daily, in the house, and in the parent. It is seen by children so soon as they can see any thing; and long before their minds are capable of distinguishing its nature, or its tendency. The parent visibly regards spirituous liquors as a peculiarly interesting enjoyment of sense, at a time when they know no enjoyments but those of sense. Of course, they cannot but think it eminently valuable. The means of intoxication are also provided to their hand; and their own home, so far as a dangerous and malignant influence is concerned, is changed into a dram-shop. The mother, in the mean time, not unfrequently contracts the

same evil habit from the father; and thus both parents unite in the unnatural and monstrous employment of corrupting their children. What a prospect is here presented to our view! A husband and wife, to whom God has given children, to be trained up by them for heaven, united together in taking them by the hand, and leading them coolly to perdition. What heart, not made of stone, can look at such a family, without feeling exquisite distress, and the most terrible forebodings? Contemplate, for a moment, the innocent helpless beings, perfectly unconscious of their danger, and incapable of learning it, thus led as victims to the altar of a modern *Moloch*, less sanguinary indeed, but not less cruel, than the heathen god, before whom the Israelitish Parents burnt their own offspring; and say, whether you most pity the children, or detest the parents.

Secondly. *By squandering his property he deprives both of comfort and respectability.*

The comfort, which we enjoy in the present world, so far as the world itself is concerned, is principally found in realizing the expectations, which we have rationally, and habitually formed, concerning our future circumstances in life. These expectations are, of course, grounded on the circumstances of our parents. We expect what we are thus taught to expect; and this naturally is, that we receive such an education, and pass through life in such a manner, as is common to the children of those who are in similar circumstances. These expectations the drunken parent gradually fritters away with the gradual diminution of his estate. The mind of the child sees, with more and more discouragement, one expected gratification vanish after another, till it ceases to expect at all; and sinks down into sullen, or broken-hearted despair.

Among the evils, which children suffer, *a prime one is the loss of education*, of that education, I mean, which is suited to their condition in life. The instructions which children receive, are a debt, which no parent can without extreme guilt refuse to discharge; and of which no child can be prevented, but by robbery, as well as fraud. They are the chief means of his future comfort, and his future usefulness. They take him out of the list of savages; and place him in the rank of men. They form him to wisdom, to worth, and to honour. Beyond this, they open to him

the gates of virtue, glory, and immortality; and point to him the path to heaven.

The most important of these instructions the parent himself is able, and therefore bound, to give; the instructions especially of a moral and religious nature, which are given, and received, with incomparably the greatest efficacy in the morning of life. But what instructions can a drunkard communicate? What must be the efficacy of even truth itself, proceeding from disturbed reason, a reeling frame, and a babbling tongue? With this image before him, what child can sufficiently withdraw himself from shame, and anguish, to learn at all? With what a contradictory and monstrous deformity of character, must religious truths and precepts be inculcated on his child by a man imbruted by strong drink!

The government of children is obviously of no less importance than their instruction. But what must be the government exercised by a sot? A mixture of contradictions, imbecility, and rage; a mixture, which every child, six years old, perfectly understands; and which no child of that age can respect, or love. How can he reprove them for their faults? His own life is nothing but a tissue of faults. How can he enjoin on them virtuous conduct? His own life is a perpetual war upon virtue. How can he recommend to them religion? His whole character is an insult upon religion. All this his children perfectly know; and their meaning eyes, if he will look into them, will tell him the story in language unutterable.

Thirdly. *He breaks their hearts by subjecting them to insupportable mortification.*

The Drunkard presents his family with the melancholy sight of an intoxicated parent: an image always before their eyes: an image which sinks them in the dust: an image which overwhelms them in despair. What child can look at such an object, and remember that this object is his parent, without a broken heart?

The distresses thus experienced, he renders double-edged by his own fretful and passionate temper. All drunkards, almost, assume this temper of course; and in this manner become intolerable nuisances to those with whom they are most intimately connected. The house of a drunkard is always the seat of discontent, and turmoil.

The sufferings of his family soon become too great to be borne with patience. Complaints, which nature cannot stifle, beget criminations, reproaches, abuses, and quarrels: terminating, not unfrequently, in wounds, bloodshed, and death.

In this manner the *temper* of his family is ruined. They are taught, and in a sense forced, to become hostile to each other; and prepared to become enemies to mankind. At the same time, they are rendered uncomfortable to themselves; and should they have families of their own, are made curses to them also.

Their spirits, in the mean time, are broken down by an unceasing consciousness, which they cannot escape, that their disgrace in all its complication, is known and published, wherever *they* are known. *The head*, at least, of their domestic body *is* not only distressingly, but scandalously *sick;* and sick with a hopeless, as well as shameful disease. The *members*, in greater or less degrees, *suffer* with the head; and, *for* it at least, suffer inexpressibly.

To all these things ought to be added their continual apprehension, that their husband, and parent, will come to some dreadful disaster, or to an untimely end, by some one of that numerous train of accidents, to which he is daily exposed; and the terrible conviction, that, should he even escape these evils, he is still going regularly onward to final perdition. This consummation of evils they are compelled to expect, with an assurance little short of absolute knowledge; and cannot fail to tremble in the morning, lest the dreadful event should arrive before the close of the day.

10. *The Drunkard destroys his Life.*

The drunkard is as really a suicide, as if he compassed his death, by the pistol, or the halter. The difference is, principally, that the destruction is slower, and accomplished by a long succession of sins, and not by one bold desperate effort of turpitude; and that the drunkard, instead of aiming at his life, aims merely at the gratification of his appetite: while the suicide makes his own destruction his prime purpose. The drunkard is a negligent, the suicide an intentional self-murderer. Often, indeed, the drunkard destroys himself in a moment. Often, as I have already observed, he falls from his horse; or into the fire; or into the water; or is brought to an untimely end by some

other fatal accident. Most usually, however, he wastes, gradually, the taper of life before the time; and thus cuts off one-fourth, one-third, or one-half, of his *accepted time:* even while he lives, by his desperate progress in sin, he terminates all his hopes of salvation.

11. *The Drunkard ruins his Soul.*

It has been heretofore observed, that the drunkard destroys his reason. In this manner he is unfitted for all profitable use of the means of grace, and for all attention to eternal life. Every call of mercy finds him stupid and regardless. To every threatening, his ears are deaf: to every promise his heart is insensible. The power of motives he knows not how to feel: and even their nature he cannot comprehend. To temptations, on the contrary, he is always exposed, alive, and awake. Around him, therefore, temptations throng, and every tempter fastens on him as his prey. Sin, of course, becomes his business: and he *draws iniquity as with a cart-rope.*

In the mean time, he is, beyond most other men, hopeless of reformation. The hopeless condition of a sot is proverbial. Amendment in this case is so rare as scarcely to admit belief. Indeed, heaven seems to have stamped this sin almost always with reprobation. To complete his miserable condition, he is cut off from prayer. No person who intends to sin, can pray. No person who intends to tempt himself, as the drunkard always does, can say, *Lead me not into temptation; but deliver me from evil;* and no person, who cannot pray, can be saved. Thus the drunkard holds out to his family, and to the world, the deplorable spectacle of a sinner, hardened beyond the common measure; exposing himself to sin, of every kind, and in every degree, and yet voluntarily depriving himself of the usual means of repentance; hastening to perdition, and yet closing his eyes to the dangers of the precipice on which he stands, and to the terrors of the gulf, which opens beneath.

IV. *I shall now endeavour summarily to point out the means of avoiding this dreadful evil.*

1. *Among these means, it will be readily seen, must be the avoidance of the causes, by which intoxication is solicited or encouraged.* Most of these causes may, ordinarily be avoided by a little care, and a little resolution. No

persons, except the family of the drunkard, are obliged to be present, unless casually, to examples of this nature. No person is necessitated to frequent the places in which, or company of the persons by whom this evil habit is encouraged. Every man can avoid regular drinking. That all this is the duty of every man, a duty of the most pressing kind, will not be questioned. Every thing, here, depends *on resisting*, or avoiding, *the beginnings of evil.*

Peculiarly, is it the duty, and wisdom, of all men to abstain from the haunts of drunkenness, from drinking companions, and from regular drinking. Almost all habits of intoxication are originated by one, or other of these causes. He who becomes familiar with these temptations, is advancing to perdition with his eyes open.

2. *The man who finds in himself any peculiar relish for spirituous liquors, is bound to abstain from them wholly.* The relish for these increases, invariably with every instance and degree of indulgence. To cherish it, therefore, is to make ourselves drunkards: and it is cherished most efficaciously by repeated drinking. No man will do this, who is not a fair candidate for bedlam.

3. *All persons who have already begun the habit of intoxication, are bound to desist, absolutely from all use of strong drink.* Every effort at gradual reformation will only cheat him, who makes it. At first, it may seem to promise something; but it will soon be found to perform nothing of any use. The candidate for reformation will speedily find himself more entangled than ever, and at a greater distance from the reformation intended. Hard as the case may be: he must break off at once, or be ruined.

4. *Persons not peculiarly in danger of this evil, are nevertheless, bound scrupulously to guard against it.*

No reputation, no wisdom, nor hardly any worth, will secure man against drunkenness. This sin is found in the cottage, and in the palace; in the study of the philosopher, and in the sacred desk; in the hall of council, and on the bench of justice; and, contrary to what would seem the dictates of nature, as well as delicacy, in the female sex; even in instances, where distinction, understanding, amiableness, and refinement would appear to forbid even the suspicion. In most, if not all, of these cases, the evil creeps insensibly on the unhappy subject; and overcomes

him before he is aware. A prime object, to be here regarded, is, therefore, *to keep the danger always before our eyes.* We are ever to feel, that we ourselves are in danger; and to consider an habitual, lively dread of it as our first safety. We are to form, also, vigorous and standing resolutions, that we will not be overcome. These we are invariably to form in the fear of God; with a solemn recollection of his presence; with an humble dependence on Him to bless us; and with fervent supplications for his blessing. To strengthen our resolutions, and to keep our fears awake, we are to mark the miserable victims of this sin with anxiety and terror; to regard the sin itself as *the highway to hell;* and to realize, that in yielding to it we seal our own reprobation.

To all this conduct motives can never be wanting. Multitudes, of the highest import, and the most commanding efficacy, have been already suggested in the progress of this discourse. Every heart in this house, which is not formed of adamant, must have felt their force. Nothing pleads for it, except the mere appetite for strong drink: an appetite, usually unnatural, and created by casual indulgence. All things else in heaven, and in earth, exclaim against it with a single voice. Our health, our reputation, our safety, our reason, our lives, our souls, our families, and our friends, in solemn and affecting union, urge, entreat, and persuade, us to abstain. God commands; Christ solicits; the Spirit of Grace influences, us to abstain. Angels and glorified saints behold our conduct with such anxiety and alarm, as happy beings can feel; and watch, and hope, to see our escape. The Law with a terrible voice thunders in our ears that dreadful denunciation, "Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Even hell itself, hostile as it is to our salvation, follows the rest of the universe; and in spite of its own malevolence, subjoins its dreadful admonition, by marshalling before us the innumerable hosts of miserable wretches, whom this sin has driven to its mansions of despair. Who, that does not already sleep the sleep of death, can refuse to hear, awake, and live?

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THE GREAT ERROR DETECTED.

Mr. John Berridge, Vicar of Everton, Bedfordshire, was an eminently useful minister of the Church of England, whose evangelical labours commenced in 1758, and closed in 1793. He is well known in Britain as the author of a work entitled, "The Christian World Unmasked," a most eccentric and interesting volume; also "Songs of Zion;" "Cheerful Piety, or religion without gloom;" and likewise by a number of letters, written in his own laconic, nervous, and pious style. He was eminently an evangelist, carrying the glad tidings of salvation into the numerous villages around him that were destitute of the gospel; so that he used to say, "I have forty shops to serve beside my own parish church." Many souls are said to have been awakened and converted by his labours; and his name is revered by numbers in the counties of Bedford and Cambridge, whose fathers and grandfathers were blessed under his ministry. Soon after the commencement of his evangelical labours he gave an account of the change he had experienced in a letter to a friend, which, with a few slight alterations, is as follows:—

Everton, July 3, 1758.

Rev. and dear Sir,

AS I believe you to be desirous of knowing the truth yourself, and of bringing souls to the truth, I take the liberty to acquaint you with the wondrous things which God has done for my soul, and the souls of my people. In order to this, it may be needful to give you a little previous information of my manner of life, from my youth up to this present time. When I was about the age of fourteen years, God was pleased to show me that I was a sinner, and that

I must be born again before I could enter into the kingdom of heaven. Accordingly I betook myself to reading, praying, fasting, and watching. In this manner I went on, but not always with the same diligence, until about a year ago. I thought myself in the right way to heaven, though as yet I was wholly out of it. I imagined I was travelling towards Zion, though I had never set my face thitherward. Indeed God would have shown me that I was wrong—*by not owning my ministry;* but I had no regard to this for a long time, imputing my want of success to the naughty hearts of my hearers, and not to my naughty doctrine. You may perhaps ask me, what was my doctrine? Dear sir, it was a doctrine that every man will naturally hold, while he continues in an unregenerate state, viz. that we are to be justified partly by faith, and partly by works of our own. This doctrine I preached for six years at a curacy which I served for the college. Though I took some extraordinary pains, and pressed sanctification upon them very earnestly, yet they continued as unsanctified as before, and not one soul was brought to Christ. There was a little more of the form of religion in the parish, but not a whit of the power. At length I removed to Everton. Here again I pressed sanctification and regeneration as vigorously as I could; but finding no success, after two years preaching in this manner, I began to be discouraged. Now some secret misgivings arose in my mind that I was not right myself: this happened about Christmas last. These misgivings grew strong, and at last very painful. Being under great doubts, I cried unto the Lord very earnestly;—the constant language of my heart was this:—Lord if I am right, keep me so; if I am not right, make me so, and lead me to the knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus." After about ten days crying to the Lord, he was pleased to send an answer to my prayers. As I was sitting and musing on a text of scripture one morning in my house, the following words were darted into my mind with wonderful power, and seemed indeed like a voice from heaven:—"Cease from thy own works." Before I heard these words, my mind was in a very unusual calm; but as soon as I heard them, my soul was in a tempest, and the tears flowed from my eyes like a torrent. The scales fell from my eyes immediately. Now I clearly saw the rock I had

been splitting upon for nearly thirty years:—do you ask what this rock was? It was—*some secret reliance on my own works for salvation.*

I hoped to be saved partly by my own name, and partly in the name of Christ, though I am told there is salvation in no other name, except the name of Jesus Christ. I had hopes to be saved partly through the merits of Christ, and partly through my own good deeds, though I am told we are saved by grace through faith, and not of works, Eph. ii. 8, 9. I had hoped to make myself acceptable to God, partly through my own good works, though we are told we are accepted in the Beloved, Eph. i. 6. I had hoped to make my peace with God, partly through my own obedience to his laws, though I am told that peace is to be had by faith only, Rom. v. 1. I now see that when we are justified, it is done freely and graciously without the least merit of ours, and solely by the grace of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, Rom. iii. 24—28. All that is previously needful to justification is this, that we be convinced by the Spirit of God of our own sinfulness, Isa. lxiv. 6,—convinced that we are children of wrath by nature, on account of our birth in sin, Eph. ii. 3—that we are under the curse of God on account of our actual sin, Gal. iii. 11,—and under these convictions come to the Lord Jesus Christ, renouncing all righteousness, Jer. xxiii. 6. Again, Christ says, Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden (with the burden of sin,) and I will give you rest; I will take the burden away; I will release you from the guilt of sin. Here you may observe, the only thing required of us when we come to Christ is, to come burdened, and sensible that none can remove ours sins but Christ alone. Hear how he cries out, Isa. lv. 1. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters and drink; come buy wine and milk (which are the blessings of the gospel) without money and without price," viz. for no merit of our own. We must not think to make a purchase of these blessings by any deserts of ours; they are offered freely, that is, graciously, and must be received freely: nothing more is required than to thirst after them. Why was the Pharisee rejected? Luke xviii. 14. Because he came pleading his own works before God. He was devout, just, chaste, abstemious, and thanked God for ena-

bling him to be so: thus far all was right. But he had some reliance on these works, and therefore pleads the merits of them before God, which shows he did not know what a sinner he was, and that he could only be saved by grace through faith. He opens his mouth before God, and pleads his own cause, though God declares, that every mouth shall be stopped before him, and all the world be brought in guilty, Rom. iii. 19. Why was the publican justified? Not on account of his good works. He was sensible of his evil ones, and accordingly came self-condemned, and crying out for mercy.

Dear sir, hear what is the need and progress of religion in the soul of man. When the Spirit of God hath convinced any person that he is a child of wrath, and under the curse of God, (which is every one's condition till he hath received Jesus Christ into his heart by faith,) the heart of such a one becomes broken for sin, and feels what he never knew before, that he hath no faith, and accordingly laments his evil heart of unbelief. In this state all men continue, some a longer, some a shorter time, till God works in them; then they are justified, and are at peace with him, Rom. v. 1. They have their sins forgiven them; for without this they cannot have peace, Is. lvii. 21. When we have received faith to justify our persons, we receive the Spirit to sanctify our nature, Eph. i. 13. Gal. iii. 14. Now the work of sanctification goes forward: now his fruit is more and more unto holiness: now the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, Rom. v. 5: now he is filled with joy and peace in believing, Rom. xv. 13: now he rejoiceth with joy unspeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8; and now he hath the Spirit of God bearing witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, Rom. viii. 16. These things are strange to believe, notwithstanding all my reading, praying, and watching; and every one will be a stranger to them till he is a child of God in Jesus Christ. But to proceed; though a believer is sanctified, yet his hopes of heaven are not built on his sanctification, but on Christ by faith, Col. ii. 10. The moment he seeks to be justified by his own obedience to God's law, that moment he falls from grace, Gal. v. 4. Accordingly, though he labours to abound in all the fruits of righteousness, yet,

like Paul, he desires to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness; that is, not relying on it, but on the righteousness of God by faith, Phil. iii. 8, 9.

Now let me point out this *grand delusion*, which had so many years deceived my own soul. I saw very clearly something of the unholiness of my nature, and the necessity of being born again: accordingly I watched, prayed, and fasted too, thinking by these means to purify my heart, whereas it can be purified by faith only, Acts xv. 9. Watching, praying, and fasting, are necessary duties; but I, like many others, placed some secret reliance on them, thinking they were to do much for me, in part at least, with Christ. The truth is, though I saw myself to be a sinner, and a great sinner, yet I did not see myself "*an utter lost sinner*," and therefore would not come to Jesus Christ alone to save me. I despised the doctrine of justification by faith alone, looking upon it as a foolish and dangerous doctrine. I was not yet stript of all my self-righteousness; I had not considered it as filthy rags, and therefore went about to establish a righteousness of my own, and did not submit to the righteousness of God by faith, Rom. x. 3. I did seek for a righteousness through faith; but, as it were, by the works of the law: thus I stumbled and fell, Rom. ix. 32. In short, I put the justice of God in one scale, and as many good works as I could in the other; and as I always found my good works not to be a balance to the divine justice, I then threw in Christ as a makeweight. This every one does who hopes for salvation, partly by doing what he can for himself and then relying on Christ for the rest. But, dear sir, Christ will be a whole Saviour, or none at all. If you have any good services of your own to recommend you to God, you are certainly without an interest in Christ. Be you ever so serious, sober, just, and devout, you are still under the curse of God, and know it not, as I was, provided you have any allowed reliance on your own works, and think that they are to do something for you, and Christ the rest.

I now proceed to acquaint you with the success I have lately had in my ministry. As soon as God had opened my eyes, and showed me the true way to salvation, I began immediately to preach it. Now I dealt with my hearers in a very different manner from what I had used to do. I told

them plainly they were children of wrath, and under the curse of God, though they knew it not; and none but Jesus Christ could deliver them from the curse. I asked them, if they had ever broken the law of God once, in thought, word, or deed?—then they were under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." And again, "He that keepeth the whole law, and yet offendeth in one point, is guilty of all." If indeed we could keep the whole law, without offending in one point; if we had done, and could continue to do, all the things contained in God's law, then indeed we might lay claim to eternal life on the score of our own works. But who is sufficient for these things? If we break God's law, we immediately fall under the curse of it, and none can deliver us from the curse but Jesus Christ: there is an end for ever afterwards of justification from our own works. No future good behaviour can make any atonement for past miscarriages. If I keep all God's laws to-day, this is no amends for breaking them yesterday. If, therefore, I am once under the curse of God, for breaking the law, I can never after do any thing of myself to deliver me from the curse. I may cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death!" and I find none able to deliver me but Jesus Christ, Rom. vii. 25. So that if I am once a sinner, nothing but the blood of Christ Jesus can cleanse me from sin. All my hopes are then in him, and I must fly to him as the only refuge set before me. In this manner, dear sir, I preached, (and do preach,) labouring to beat down all self-righteousness, labouring to show them they were in a lost and perishing state, and nothing could recover them from this state, and make them children of God, but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Now see the consequence. This was strange doctrine to my hearers. They were surprised, alarmed, and vexed. The old man, the carnal nature, was stirred up, and railed and opposed the truth. However, the minds of most were seized with some convictions, and the hearts of some were truly broken for sin; so that they came to me as those mentioned in the Acts, thoroughly pricked to the heart, and crying out with strong and bitter cries, "What must I do to be saved?" I then laid the promises before them, and told them, if they

found themselves under the curse, Christ was ready to deliver them from it. If they were really weary and heavy laden, Christ would give them rest. If their hearts were broken for sin, and they would look up to Christ, he would heal them. I exhorted them also to thank God for these convictions, and believed it was "a token for good" to their souls; for God smites before he heals, Isa. xix. 22. I daily found that they received comfort from the promises: and though they complained much of the burden of sin, and of an evil heart of unbelief, yet they always went away comforted and refreshed. Many have come to me in this manner, and more are continually coming. Though some have fallen from their first convictions, yet others cleave stedfastly to the Lord. They begin to rejoice in him, and love him: they love his word, and meditate much on it; they exercise themselves in prayer, and adorn their profession with a suitable life and conversation.

Now let me make one reflection. I preached sanctification very earnestly for six years in a former parish, and never brought one soul to Christ. I did the same in this parish for two years, without any success; but as soon as ever I preached Jesus Christ, and faith in his blood, believers were added to the church continually. Then people flocked from all parts to hear the glorious sound of the gospel, some coming six miles, others eight, and others ten, and that constantly. Let me ask, what was the reason my ministry was not blessed when I preached salvation partly by faith and partly by works? It was because this doctrine is not of God, and he will prosper no minister but such as preaches salvation in his appointed way, namely, by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Let me now apply myself to your own heart, and may God dispose you to receive my word in the spirit of meekness. Indeed, Sir, I love you and respect you, or else I could not have written to you so freely. Are you then in the same error that I was for forty years? viz. that you must be saved partly by faith, and partly by works? Have you constantly preached this doctrine? Then you may certainly be assured of these two things: first, *you have never brought one soul to Christ;* and secondly, that *you are not in the way to salvation yourself.* O be not displeased with me for telling you the truth! But you will say, perhaps,

that you have not only been sincere, but zealous in preaching the word of God: so was I; but there is a "zeal" which is "not according to knowledge," and that zeal I had, though I knew it not. You may say farther, that you have read and prayed much: so have I; but I still knew nothing as I ought to know, till God was pleased to show me that I was blind; then I cried heartily to him for light and direction, and he hath opened my eyes, John ix. 30. Dear sir, will you attend to the following advice? It is very safe advice, be the state of your soul what it may. Pray to God to lead you to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Beseech God to keep you in the truth, if you have received it; or if you are in an error, to reveal it unto you. If you will do this heartily and constantly, God will not suffer you to abide long in darkness, if indeed you are in darkness.

I now proceed to give you some further account of myself, and the impediment that kept me from the truth. When I first came to the University, I applied myself diligently to my studies, thinking human learning a very necessary qualification for a divine, and that no one ought to preach unless he had taken a degree in the university. Accordingly I studied the classics, mathematics, logic, philosophy, metaphysics, and read the works of our eminent divines. This I did for twenty years, and all the while was departing more and more from the truth as it is in Jesus: vainly hoping to receive that light and instruction from human wisdom which could be had from the word of God and prayer only.

Dear sir, during this time though I was a little more grave, and took a little more pains in my ministry than some of my brethren, I had no kind of acquaintance with experimental religion, and could not abide the fundamental doctrine of justification by faith: and I thought it high presumption in any to preach unless they had taken holy orders. But God was pleased to open my eyes about half a year ago, and he showed and taught me other things. Now I saw that nothing had kept me so much from the truth as a desire of human wisdom. Now I perceived it was as difficult for a wise or learned man to be saved, as it was for a rich man or a nobleman, 1 Cor. i. 26. Now I saw that God chooses the foolish things of this world to confound

the wise, and the weak things to confound the mighty: for two plain reasons—that no flesh should glory in his presence, 1 Cor. i. 26—29, 31; and to show that faith did not stand, or was not produced by the wisdom of man, but the power of God, and by the Spirit of God, 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5. Now I saw that every believer was anointed by the Holy Ghost, and thereby led to the knowledge of all useful truths, 1 John ii. 20, and of course every true believer was qualified to make known the way of salvation, provided he had the gift of utterance. Now I saw that the doctrine of justification by faith was the very doctrine of the gospel, and did no longer wonder at the success which those who preached it met with, whether they were clergy or laymen. They preach the doctrine of Christ, and Christ owns it, and many are added to the church daily. But you will say, these men are schismatics. True schism consists, not in preaching contrary to the customs of *an established church*, but in preaching contrary to the doctrine of *the gospel church*. Now, dear sir, let me lay open my sin and shame to you. I solemnly subscribed to the articles of our church, and gave my hearty consent to them. Amongst the rest, I declared, "We are counted righteous before God, only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our works or deservings:" that "we are justified by faith only," as it is expressed in the eleventh article. But I solemnly subscribed to this article, and neither believed it nor preached it; but preached salvation partly by faith and partly by works. O what dreadful hypocrisy was this! I called and thought myself a churchman, though I was a dissenter, and a schismatic in deed and in truth; for I was far from the fundamental doctrine of the gospel, namely justification by faith only. Dreadful was my case! and yet I fear it is the case of most of the clergy of England. Scarcely any thing is preached but justification by faith and works: and what is the consequence? Why there is scarcely any true religion among us, and Christ will not own it. Look around the parish where you live, and see whether you can find any thing besides the form of religion, and not much of that. Nay, many that are thought to be religious people, who are sober, just, and devout; who read, pray, and give alms; even among these, you will scarcely find one that knows any thing of the power

of religion, and has the experimental knowledge of it. Ask such people, in the very words of scripture, whether they know that Jesus Christ is in them, or they are reprobates, 2 Cor. xiii. 5,—whether they have received an unction from the Holy One, 1 John ii. 20,—whether the love of God hath been shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost; whether they ever rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; or whether the Holy Spirit bears witness with their spirit that they are the children of God, Rom. viii. 14, 16. I say, if you ask the *better sort among them*, they will stare at you with the utmost amazement, and will think you an enthusiast, if they do not call you so. Now such people as these, who have a form of religion, but none of the power,—who are outwardly reformed, but not inwardly renewed by the Holy Spirit, are what our Saviour calls, whited sepulchres, beautiful without, but full of rottenness within. They are striving to enter into the kingdom of heaven, but are not able, because they do not strive lawfully. They do not seek to enter in by Jesus Christ, but partly by Christ and partly by themselves; partly by faith and partly by works: these are almost Christians, but not altogether Christians. And if at any time any among us happen to be seized with deep convictions, and are made sensible of their lost state, of their utter need of Christ, and that they can only be justified by faith in his blood; these people, not finding proper food for their souls in our churches, are obliged to go somewhere else, and seek it where they can find it. It is no wonder, therefore, that there are so few zealous Christians among us.

If you read the works of the good old bishops that were published a hundred years ago, you will there find the gospel of Christ preached. Since that time (I mean, in the last century,) our clergy have been gradually departing more and more from our doctrines, articles, and homilies: so that at length there is scarcely a clergyman to be found who does not preach contrary to the articles to which he subscribed. Almost all the sermons that have been published in the last century are full of this soul-destroying doctrine that is preached by bishops and curates, that we are to be justified partly by our own works and partly by Christ's merits. Do you ask how all the clergy fell into this pernicious doctrine? I answer, very easily: every man,

while he continues under the power of the carnal mind, and is not awakened to see his utter lost condition, is naturally disposed to embrace this doctrine. Not being convinced by the Spirit of God that all his righteousness is as filthy rags, Isa. lxiv. 6, and that he is without help and strength in himself, Rom. iv. 5, and v. 6; I say, not being convinced of this, he naturally goes about to establish some righteousness of his own, and cannot submit to the righteousness of God by faith. Not being yet sensible of his lost and helpless state, he must have some reliance on himself; and instead of looking wholly to Christ for salvation, he looks partly to Christ and partly to himself. Instead of seeking to be justified in the Lord, he seeks to be justified partly through the Lord, and partly through himself. But see what Christ says of this matter, Isa. xlv. 22—25.

Now let me ask how the whole Church of Rome departed from the gospel simplicity, and fell into this doctrine of works and faith which we preach. It was owing to the depraved nature of man, which makes him think himself to be something, and that he can do something, though he is nothing and can do nothing to justify himself in God's sight. At the Reformation, our church returned to Jesus Christ again, placed justification on the gospel footing of faith only, and so it continues to this day. But though our articles continue sound, and our homilies evangelical, yet our clergy have once more departed from both, and are advancing to Rome again with hasty strides, preaching, in spite of articles and subscription, the most pernicious, papistical, and damnable doctrine of faith and works; which doctrine I am well assured no one can hold, and be in a state of salvation. But I trust God is once more visiting in mercy our poor distressed church. He has lately raised up many who have courageously and successfully preached the truth; and he is daily raising up others. At Christmas last, I was informed there were forty clergymen who were brought to the acknowledgment of the truth. Three more since have been added to the truth within the last six weeks. Oh! for ever adored be the mercy of God for opening mine own eyes, and leading me to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

Dear sir, When I sat down to write, I did not intend to fill more than half a sheet of paper; but when I took pen

in hand, I knew not how to lay it aside. I have written my sentiments with great freedom, and I hope without offence. May God give a blessing to what I have written: may he enlighten your eyes, as he has done mine, adored be his name! May he lead you by his Spirit to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and make you instrumental in bringing souls out of darkness into light, and translating them out of the kingdom of Satan into the glorious kingdom of his dear Son. Amen.

ON JUSTIFICATION.

To be justified, is to have all your sins blotted out of the book of God's remembrance, and to be made accepted in the Beloved. It is to have the Father of mercies smile upon you with a complacency and tenderness you never knew before: looking now at his Son; then at you; and at every new look, blessing you with new endearments. It is to have the Judge of all the earth acquit you fully and honourably, in spite of the dreadful depravities of your own hearts, and the innumerable transgressions of your lives, circumstantially reckoned up, and strongly urged against you by the great accuser of the brethren, and this acquittance owing, not to any thing you could say in your own vindication, (for all you could plead to the indictment was "guilty, guilty; unclean, unclean,") but to the effectual interposition of the Lord our righteousness. He undertook your cause, offered himself to be your advocate, and pleaded for you with power that carried all before it. "Deliver them from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom." The Eternal Father, satisfied with such a plea, forgave your iniquities, ordered your discharge, and embraced you with the most cordial and unreserved delight.

We see, then, that the greatness of sin is no bar to faith, since it is the righteousness of Christ that justifieth. Nothing is more common, nothing is more natural, than for newly awakened souls to ask, "wherewith shall I come before the Lord, or bow before the Most High God! I that am such an impure and guilty wretch, how can I stand before a consuming fire! My flesh trembles for fear of him, and I am afraid of his judgments. And well you might be, if you had nothing but these filthy rags to appear in; but if you have been permitted to wash your robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb; if his cleanliness is put upon you, and he hath promised to make you accepted in the Beloved; whatever you have been; let your characters have been ever so black, and your guilt ever so heinous, and sin ever so much abounded, grace will much more abound; the white raiment which Christ gives will cover all, and you shall be presented without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.

From the unpublished writings of Lavington.

N^o. 4

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MRS. HAMILTON.

The following is a true account of the dealings of God with the widow Sarah Hamilton, who was born and educated in the Romish religion, and afterwards converted to the Christian Faith, as will appear in this narrative.

I was born in Frankfort, in Germany, in 1745. In the 7th year of my age my father came to Charleston, in South Carolina; his name was George Beckhouse, by profession a Roman Catholic. He lived at Charleston, until I was about 16 years of age, when I was married to Mr. Alexander Hamilton, an eminent merchant, who in the contest between Britain and America, was shot dead in his own house, which was consumed by fire. In this distressed situation, having no children except an adopted daughter, and contemplating on my misfortune, my best friend with all our substance snatched from me, as it were, in an instant, created in me new and awful sensations, which are beyond my power to relate. I then fled to a rich uncle for an asylum, who treated me with the greatest respect and attention, and welcomed me to his house and servants, with all the accommodations that they could yield or afford: he offered to make me his heir, and directed his servants to treat me with all the kindness and respect as though they were really mine. I lived there with the enjoyment of all the comforts this world could afford, but was still disconsolate in consideration of my heavy loss, and dressed myself in mourning, and thus passed through some lonesome days and wearisome nights, for a considerable time; at length, being desirous to obtain some relief, I went to a theatre, or play-house, where I saw divers plays acted on the stage; and one in particular, exhibited General Washington and Lady Montgomery, whose husband was

killed in battle, in Canada, and the agitation that she manifested in the scene, brought the death of my husband to my mind with such powerful sensations, that I had nearly fainted. The shortness of life, and certainty of death, the fading nature of all worldly enjoyments, were then plain to my view, and my distress was inexpressible. I went home, took my bed with a heavy heart, drowned in melancholy, and with pensive mind and wearied limbs I fell asleep and dreamed.*

After some months' meditation on my dream I fell asleep and dreamed the same dream again, and also a third time. This brought me to such serious reflections that I hardly durst sleep at all! yet was at a loss for the interpretation of my dream. I arose very early one morning and went to my uncle and aunt, and told them that I saw my uncle and aunt, the priest, and the people, extremely black in a dream, and that I felt very much concerned about it; but not so much as to prevent my going to balls and other public places, where they asked me to tell my dream, out of curiosity. I accordingly told it them frequently; and after a while my troubles entirely left me. But in about a year and nine months, there came a gentleman from Georgia to visit me; he was a very rich man, and possessed wealth in abundance. The second time he visited me, he invited my uncle and aunt, and myself, to visit him and see his plantation; accordingly we all went together, and beheld his situation, which was truly elegant. His house was very large, and ornamented inside and out; on the top was a balcony, and a summer seat therein. As he led me to the summer seat, I thought of my dream. We returned home from our visit well suited with the place. The third time he came to visit me, he brought me just such a head-dress as I dreamed about and it pleased me. We concluded to marry, and appointed a time when the nuptial ceremony should be solemnized. But about that time there was a people called Baptists in that place, who were ridiculed, and all manner of evil spoken against them. I confess that I hated the very sight of them, and had it been in my power would soon have banished them out of my sight and the country too. The aforesaid gentleman took a walk one day, and when

* The dream is omitted.

he returned, he told my uncle, that one of his slaves was that day going to be dipt by a man that looked more like a hangman than a priest. This much displeased me. I immediately replied, that I wondered gentlemen of note would suffer such fellows to go about the country cheating poor ignorant people in such a manner. My uncle said he would go and flog the slave home, and not suffer the dirty wench to be so deluded, were it not that a gentleman had appointed to visit him that day. I told him that I would go, if he would furnish me with a carriage. Accordingly I went. I no sooner came to the place, than I saw the minister, and knew immediately, although I had never seen him before, that it was the same man I saw in my dream, that handed me the ball of thread and helped me out of the pit. The sight of this man so affected my mind, that I was as one thunderstruck. He was the very one whom I saw amongst the shining throng of happy people, and I amongst the cursed black crew. I then thought I was cursed in very deed, which flung me immediately almost into despair, and in the greatest agony I fell to the earth. Viewing myself undone forever, and eternally lost. I was in the most deplorable situation conceivable, and despaired of ever going from that place. I thought that the earth was just about to swallow me up alive into everlasting destruction, both soul and body, and really expected to fall straightway into the bottomless pit, where there was no recovery. My distress was so great, the people discovered it, gathered round me on all sides, and supposed me in a fit, and sought means to recover me but in vain; for my distress was of such a nature that medical assistance was entirely baffled; I fainted and fell to the ground; they lifted me into the coach again, and carried me home to my uncle's house. A great company of people followed me. This situation of mine greatly exasperated the minds of the people; some swore they would kill the minister, because they supposed he had bewitched me: and my uncle immediately sent for the Romish priest to dispel the witchcraft from me; but his presence was very disagreeable to me. I told him to begone, for we were all going to hell together. Another minister then came to me, but I could not bear the sight of him neither; for it appeared to me he had helped me to commit the unpardona-

ble sin. I told him to begone quick; and that he was a wicked wretch, and a wolf in sheep's clothing; that he would neither go to heaven himself, nor let others: and as he was turning to go from me, my aunt told him not to mind what I said, for I was crazy. Then this minister began to weep to see me in such a situation, and advised my uncle to send for that Baptist minister to see if he could take the witchcraft from me. He accordingly sent for him seventy-five miles. The minister willingly came—they set victuals and drink on a table for him, but durst not let even a servant go into the room where he was, lest he should bewitch them also. At length he came to speak with me, and asked me how I did: I told him I was a poor, miserable, lost creature. He told me if I was lost, I was one of those very persons whom Christ died for, and came to seek and to save. I told him that was impossible, for I had committed the unpardonable sin: he said he thought it was my mistake, for I did not know enough. After he had talked some time, he put his hand into his pocket and took out the New Testament; it was the first that ever I saw. He read the third chapter of Mark, and gave his mind concerning the unpardonable sin. He told me he was going to visit a gospel sinner, whose case he thought was much worse than mine, which frightened me very much indeed; for I thought he did not understand my case at all: he said, God willing, he would see me again to-morrow. I said, pray Sir, don't forget me! and when he saw me so affected, he said, shall I pray for you before I go? I answered, Yes. What shall I pray for? I told him to pray that the Lord might have mercy on me? with these words he seemed affected, which gave me to understand that he thought there was no mercy for me; but he kneeled down and prayed; I kneeled also; and when he spake of the spotless purity of God, before whom sinless angels veiled their faces, crying, Holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, and that the holiness and purity of God filled immensity, I thought it was impossible that I could have mercy; and when he had finished his prayer, he went away. After he was gone, I remembered that the man of God told me that Christ came to save even the worst of sinners, and I thought that I could not be worse than the vilest. I then considered that the spotless angels, of whom he spake, rejoice

over one sinner that repenteth, though ever so vile. I then imagined myself in a great king's house, who had an only son, and one of the king's servants committed a crime worthy of death, and the executioner was about to strike the fatal blow, when the king's son came forward and offered to die that the servant might live, which he did, and set the servant at liberty; which circumstances most readily applied to my case. I thought I was the very servant. Surprising astonishment filled my soul. I beheld the Son of God expiring in agonies unknown, to gratify the malicious rage of wicked men. I thought he died to save my life, and rose again for my justification. I also viewed him as having died for all men, but was at first at a loss to see how one could die for so many; but when I saw and considered that the natural sun could shine on thousands, and each person have as great a share of the sun as though he was alone, I by this similitude understood the mystery, that, although Christ died for many, yet each one had a whole Saviour. I then saw that God could be just and justify him that believeth in Jesus, even such a wretch as I was. In this view, no tongue can tell the ecstacy of joy that I was the subject of; my distress left me, and I could give glory to God with all my heart. I longed to praise him with every breath; my prayer was, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Lord, speak, for thy servant heareth.

Upon my uncle and aunt hearing this of me, they came to the door: I said to them, dear uncle and aunt, I shall not go to hell, for Christ died for me, and I have got a whole Saviour. My uncle then shut the door, but my aunt burst into tears in hearing me talk on this subject. It then came into my mind that Christ was baptized of John in Jordan, and I must follow the example, and convince the world that I was not ashamed to own my Saviour before men. The next day the minister came, as he told me, with the man whom he went to visit, and I told them that I had found comfort, that Jesus had appeared for my relief, and that I was now willing to take him for my prophet, priest and king; that I felt determined to obey him in all things; that I thought his laws and commands were perfectly just and delightful to every obedient soul.—This declaration from me came so unexpected to the

minister, that he was overjoyed and surprised, and said to the other man, that yesterday was the first time that ever she heard any thing read from the Bible: and now she is able to teach me, (said he.) Glory to God in the highest, for he teaches as never man taught, neither is heavenly instruction dependant on human education. I then asked him if he was willing to baptize me; he told me he was glad of the opportunity, if I desired it; I told him I longed to follow my Lord and Master down the banks of Jordan, and that he would have to send for me, for I could not go to the place myself; he told me he would, and accordingly sent for me the next Lord's-day morning. When I came down to the water side, I related the dealings of God with me, which account proved instrumental in God's hands, of the awakening of fifteen souls. After the baptism was administered, they helped me to my uncle's; but behold he shut the door against me, and refused to let me in. I called to my daughter, but she gave me no answer. I now began to conclude, that he that would live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution.

I was disowned by all my former friends and relations in that place, and the minister seeing me in this distressed situation, pitied me, and told me, as long as he had one shilling of money left, I should share part of it, and desired me not to give way to trouble of this kind. He then carried me away and hired my board for three weeks; at the end of which time he came again and baptized those fifteen persons before mentioned, for they all gave satisfactory evidence of the work of grace in their hearts, and also brought a carriage for me to go with him to North Carolina, where I lived among his people three years; and a happy three years it was to my poor soul, though rejected by my natural relations; yet I think I had daily communion with a friend that sticketh closer than earthly friends and relations; even Jesus, who was to me the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely. I really enjoyed that peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away; yea, this peace was like a river flowing from the right hand of God. So great and inexpressible was this peace and happiness, which I then enjoyed, that all other happiness looked extremely despicable and unworthy my attention. The world with all its gay and enticing charms, courted my

affections to no purpose. I thought I had rather suffer affliction with the people of God, than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season, having respect to the recompense of reward, which I daily enjoyed; esteeming the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt: yea, I esteem the present afflictions not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed hereafter; and I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness, being possessed of all the pomp, grandeur and affluence that this world can afford. I think, therefore, that however unworthy I may be of such honour, I wish to invite and exhort all, who know not these things by happy experience, that they would try the experiment for themselves. You may think it strange that I talk as I do: but O, my friends, I long for your happiness: I long to see you rejoice in hope of the glory of God; yea, I long to see the saints on earth join their rejoicing songs of praise to God with the seraphic angels in heaven, at the news of the return of one more prodigal. Come then, O sinner! come and be happy; for why will ye die? That God in whom you live, move, and have your being, tells you plainly that he delighteth not in the death of him that dieth; but that he turn and live; saying, Turn ye, turn ye, for why will you die? Behold Jesus dying on Calvary, to make a way of escape for guilty men, from sin, death, and hell, to holiness and heaven! How can you reject such pathetic expressions of Divine Benevolence? Why shall Jesus entreat in vain? Why will you oppose the good of your own souls? How can you bear the thought of being cast off from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, sentenced to everlasting destruction? O, my dear friends! think of these things, lest sudden destruction come upon you, and you cannot escape. But lest I weary your patience, I will pursue my narrative:—

After living three years in North Carolina, as I observed I began to think of my father and his family, all buried in misery and Popish superstition, and wilfully ignorant. I thought it was possible, in case I could see them, that I might be an instrument in God's hands, of leading them to a consideration of the folly of their ways. I therefore felt very anxious about the matter. I also felt a natural affec-

tion for them. I also considered that my father was a rich man, and I in a dependant situation, and knew that if he had not lost his former regard for me, that he would help me, notwithstanding our differences of opinion; and that he would delight to have me live with him. When I told my intentions to the brethren, they told me I need not go away on account of being burthensome to them, for they were willing I should live with them as long as I wished; that I need not regard their expense, for they had as lief maintain me as one of their own children; for we are one, said they; but still, if I could not content myself to stay, that they would help me: which they did. I thanked them, and took my leave. I rode in a carriage, and the driver conducted very disagreeably; I resented his conduct towards me, and was angry with him, which gave me scruples. I was filled with doubts concerning myself, and began to think I was not a Christian, but a mere hypocrite, and had been trying to deceive myself and others, but I could not deceive God, for he knoweth all things. I had thought I never should be angry again, let what would happen to me. This gave me great anxiety of mind, which lasted for a considerable time. We at length arrived within three miles of my father's house, where I stopped, in hopes that my father would send for me to come home. But the next day my brother came to the house where I was, and the woman of the house said to me, there's your brother. The reader can hardly imagine the joy I felt to see my brother again, whom I had not seen for many years. I thought he would rejoice also to see me, and therefore went to meet him, and held out my hand as a token of friendship; but, shocking to relate, I saw in his face signs of disapprobation; he frowned and stepped back, and refused to give his hand; and said to me, "my father says you shall not enter his house, for you are a disgrace to the whole family. He esteems you as a runaway, and a deluded heretic." These reflections from my brother, you may well think, excited powerful sensations in my mind; to be disowned by my own father and brother, and called a heretic; now came a fair trial of my faith and confidence in God. I concluded that the cause of their alienation of affection from me was because I was a Christian, and if so, it would become me to act like Christ; who, when he

was reviled, reviled not again; and when he was persecuted, threatened not. I think I can truly say, that all he said to me only served to engage my soul to give glory to God, that I was counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake, which I through grace was determined to do; but Satan tempted me to give up my determination to live devoted to God; I was almost tempted to go to my father and feign a repentance of my dissenting from the Romish church. But no sooner had I looked into the consequences of such a thing, but I took up my Testament which my brethren had given me, and had a desire to read some directions from God, what to do; and the first sentence I read, was. "He that forsaketh not father and mother for my sake, is not worthy of me:" and immediately I saw my duty plainly, and felt resolved to obey God rather than man. Nevertheless I thought I would go to the Romish church, where I might see my father, and that he might see me also; peradventure all his parental affection for me was not lost, and that when he saw me in a reduced state of poverty and distress, it might possibly affect his heart. I accordingly went, But, O how my heart ached to see those stupid mortals bowing to their images and priests, expecting they had power to pardon sin. Shocking thought! I even trembled at the sight, and could hardly contain myself. As soon as the exercise was over, my father came out. I went to him, but was so overcome that I could not speak for some time; at length I recovered strength, but could not forbear screaming, and fell down before him; but instead of exciting pity in him, he turned from me, as from a heretic unworthy of his notice, and would say nothing to me. I then went home again, and hired my board for a short time, with what money I had left, which my brethren had given me for the expenses of my journey. Soon after, my father, whom I still hoped had not lost all regard for me, sent a gentleman to me, who addressed me in the following language:—

"Mrs. Hamilton: your honoured father sent me to state to you the conditions on which he will receive you as his child again, and forgive you all your past disgraceful folly; which should not be once mentioned against you. In case you comply," he says, "you must return to the church from whence you have revolted, and confess your sins in revolt-

ing as you have, and renounce your frantic notions of witchcraft and Christianity, as you call it; and you shall become my beloved daughter: but if not, you must expect nothing from me, not even to own you as a daughter; for I am determined to disown you in case of your obstinacy." I told the gentleman, that it was impossible that he should disown me, for my name was on the record with the rest of his children, and also my looks so favoured his, that all who saw us would know for a certainty that I was really his child. But notwithstanding all my confidence, I considered that I must of necessity leave that place soon, for my money was now almost spent, and where to flee I did not know, being destitute of any Christian friends there, which put me in mind of Nicodemus, who followed his Lord by night. But still I had great trouble of mind: I feared that I was like Judas, who denied and betrayed his Lord for filthy lucre's sake, in consideration of the temptation that I before spoke of, concerning my going back to the Romish church, with a lie in my mouth, notwithstanding I thought to serve God privately, which I now disapproved of with great indignation. However, my father was unwilling to give the matter over so, without another trial to reclaim me from heresy, as he named it; he therefore employed a Romish priest, and a certain Mr. Smith, who lived near me at that time; crafty men indeed. I had already lived there until my money was about gone, and my clothes were then selling at a low rate, almost nothing, and in this melancholy situation, not a friend to tell my troubles to, I had none but God to appeal to for redress of grievances. The woman of the house where I lived seldom spoke to me on any subject whatever: in this forlorn situation where to go or what to do I could not tell; one consideration still comforted me; I viewed God to be my friend, and would deliver me out of all trouble in his own way; and felt willing to place my dependance on him. One day, to my great astonishment, my landlady invited me to go with her on a visit; Come, said she, Mrs. Hamilton, go with me to visit Mrs. Smith to-day, perhaps it may have a tendency to shake off this sober melancholy, that seems thus to hang about you. I accepted the invitation, not thinking of any plot against me. Mr. Smith began soon after I went in, to talk with me concerning my faith, and dissenting from

the Romish church. I asked him if he believed the Bible; I hope so, said he: well, you recollect, sir, in Revelation, how St. John attempted to fall down and worship the angel, who said, "see thou do it not,—worship God:" Now if John was forbidden to worship the holy angel, shall, or can I fall down and worship a sinful priest? Jesus has died and shed his blood to pardon my sins, and make an atonement, and now sits as an intercessor at God's right hand: God forbid therefore that I should worship any other than the living and true God. Upon which the Romish priest sprang from behind the curtain, where he had been concealed, in the greatest heat of passion imaginable. It so affrighted me to see a man in such a rage, that I rose up to go out of his sight; but it dropped into my mind, that there was now an opportunity for God to display his power, and that if the Lord would help me, I would now speak in vindication of his cause. I accordingly stepped back; and I really believe that the Lord assisted me in discharging my duty at that time; yet notwithstanding all that was said, he accosted me with rough language, which it is unnecessary to repeat. At this time Mr. Smith was so enraged, I saw he would turn me out of his house; I therefore went out of my own accord; and I believe if I ever prayed to God in my life, it was then. I had strength from God to talk to them; my tongue seemed to be let loose, and my heart was enlarged; it seemed that my mouth was filled with arguments; the Scripture flowed into my mind, text after text, as though the Bible was committed to my memory. It being in the city, about two hundred collected before I had done speaking; after which I returned to my former residence. But my brother, being fixed against me and the Protestant religion, raised a mob of a considerable number to take me away by force, and what they would have been suffered to do, had they prevailed in their design, the Lord only knows. But happily for me, the man of the house, fearing he should meet with difficulty in that case, took me privately out to a back place, where he had a horse prepared with a man's saddle on him; the first horse I ever rode in my life. I rode as I could, and he led the horse seven miles, and left me with a Presbyterian minister, where I was treated with great respect and friendship; and he told him how it was,

and made him promise not to tell who brought me there. The minister concealed me in an upper room, and said he would expose his life to save me in case of need; therefore told me to fear nothing. The next Sabbath he went to meeting and informed the people concerning me, and they contributed fifteen dollars to my relief. After these things, it came into my mind, that my adopted daughter, who was then living in Springfield, Vermont, if I could find her, would afford me a home the little time I had to live in this troublesome world. With the assistance of my brethren from place to place, I at last arrived at Springfield, where I found to my grief, that my daughter was dead, and her husband moved out of the country. But still I wish to inform my readers, that religion shall, through God's assistance, be my principal object; for I sincerely believe there is nothing more worthy of our highest regard and attention; and I am resolved to pray for Zion still, let what will become of me.

SARAH HAMILTON.

Woodstock, September 26, 1803.

N. B. Mrs. Hamilton, during the latter part of her life, resided at Woodstock, (Vermont,) among her Christian friends. She died Nov. 20, 1806.

THE FULFILMENT OF ONE DUTY WILL NOT EXCUSE THE NEGLECT OF ANOTHER.

Let me ask, Where did a man of your natural sagacity pick up the strange notion of the performance of one duty compensating for the neglect of another? Not from Scriptures; for, if any *keep the whole law and offend in one point he is guilty of all.* Not from the measures of human government; for, if you break one law, they do not inquire whether you have broken others, or kept them; but condemn the transgressor of one. Not from your dealings with your neighbours; you would think him a poor customer, who would suppose that by paying for one article he compensated for defrauding you of another. Not from reason; for, assuredly we can pay God no more than his due, when we do all that he commands. Even then we are but *unprofitable servants.* SCOTT.

No. 5

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

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THE CHRISTIAN'S DIRECTORY.

(*Extracted from an old Author.*)

The Christian receives Christ Jesus the Lord in his conversion; it must, therefore, ever be his study to walk in him all the days of his life: to "hold the beginning of his confidence steadfast unto the end," always leaning upon the Redeemer, both for righteousness and strength. To such the following *Scriptural directions* are affectionately presented:—

1. Never let the world occupy God's room in your heart. Often think of that awakening word, (1 John ii. 15.) "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." This is the sin that ruins multitudes; they mind earthly things, and they have their portion in this life. Remember, the more eagerly you pursue the world, the further your affections go from God. You are but a steward, and the larger your possessions are, the greater account you will have to give to him who has intrusted you with them. You must answer for your riches, your riches cannot answer for you. To have a competent portion of earthly things in the world is a mercy; but to have earthly things for our portion, is a dreadful misery. Let the business of your soul be the business of your life. Entertain the same opinion of the things of the world now, that you will have of them when you come to die. You see what a low price men set upon the riches, pomp, and glory of the world, when they are dying. Had you the same thoughts of these things now, you would not venture the loss of your soul, the loss of God's favour, and the loss of eternal glory, for a whole world, far less for a small trifle

of it, as many do. Think much of that text in Matt. xvi. 26. "What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or, what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

2. Be not a stranger to yourself; but often search into the state and frame of your heart. (Ps. iv. 4.) When others are censuring and backbiting their neighbours, be you trying and censuring yourself. Self-examination is a most necessary duty. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) Judge of your *eternal* state by your *spiritual* state: and judge of your spiritual state by the bias of your affections, the sources of your delights, and the allowed actions of your life. Judge of it by your hatred of sin, and love to Christ; by the conscience you make of secret prayer, and reading God's word. In communing with your own heart, ask yourself what are likeliest to be your death-bed thoughts and wishes? Will they not be such as these? O that I had loved Christ more and the world less! O that I had improved Gospel opportunities better! O that I had accepted Christ's calls and invitations more readily! O that I had spent more time in prayer and searching the Scriptures! O that I had been more spiritual and fervent in every duty! Ask yourself, what are those sins and practices which will appear most frightful when you see yourself within a step of God's tribunal? Commune with your own heart upon your bed, apply to the blood of Christ to wash away your transgressions; and ask, what is my present state? Should I be willing to lie down and die in the frame and disposition I am in just now? And I know not but I may be as near death this moment, as if I were struggling with the pangs of dissolution!

3. Put a high value upon precious time, and devote the earliest and best part of it to God and the interests of eternity. Look upon loss of time as a greater loss than the loss of money, or any worldly thing. Shun, therefore, idle and unprofitable diversions. Let the morning of your youth, and the morning of every day, and particularly the precious time of the Lord's-day, be employed and improved for God and the good of your soul. You cannot consecrate yourself too soon or too entirely to God and his service. As he demands, so he deserves, the first

and the best of your days. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." (Eccles. xii. 1.) Honourable mention is made in Scripture of the child Samuel's ministering before the Lord—of young Josiah's tenderness of heart—of Solomon's early choice of wisdom—and of Timothy's knowledge of the Scriptures from his infancy. Allow some time every day to think of and prepare for eternity! O eternity! One serious thought of eternity is enough to strike a careless soul to the heart. Man stands every hour at the door of eternity, and if he step in while out of Christ, he is eternally undone! What an awful thought is this? Every one of us within a step of being eternally blessed, or eternally cursed—eternally saved, or eternally lost! O, if every one did but believe and consider this! If we could but all *pray* as for eternity! *repent* as for eternity! *hear* as for eternity! and *live* as for eternity! O, let not religion be your diversion, but the chief business of your life. It is the one thing needful. "Give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." Make sure your calling, and thus you make sure your election. If you would make sure your calling, make it sure that you are united to Christ, and that Christ is the life of your souls; "that when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, you may also appear with him in glory." Do not rest in convictions, nor in tears, nor in prayers, nor in duties, nor in any thing short of Christ. Press both for an interest in Christ, and for the assurance of it. Assurance is attainable, and has been attained by many. And it is most necessary for cheerful obedience, for bearing the cross, rejoicing in the Lord, giving thanks for redeeming love, and for performing many other duties of Christianity.

4. Employ Christ as your surety in all cases, and in every difficulty go to him for relief. When you are called to perform duties, bear afflictions, resist temptations, struggle with corruptions, or engage with enemies, look still to Christ, and cry, "Lord, be surety for me. O Lord, undertake for me." (Ps. cxix. 122. Isa. xxxviii. 14.) Plead his own promise, and expect the fulfilment of it. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.)

5. As you expect to live with Christ in heaven, study to live with him on earth. Make his honour the ultimate end of all your designs and actions. Aim at a universal conformity to his laws and precepts, and cleave fast to him in

a way of holiness, whatever it may cost you. Think not the worse of Christ and his ways on account of the reproach and persecution they may bring upon you. Join with the little flock to whom the kingdom is promised, which will abundantly compensate all your sufferings for Christ. Never follow a multitude to do evil, but ever cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart, however few join you.

6. Draw all your strength for work and warfare from Christ, and never let your duties take the place of his righteousness. Christ himself tells us, that without Him we can do nothing, (John xv. 5.;) i. e. nothing aright, or, nothing that is acceptable to God. While you seek after holiness, never let it take the place of the righteousness of Christ. Holiness is to be loved, but His righteousness only, is to be trusted; for though holiness be a necessary qualification for heaven and salvation, and our evidence of it, yet the righteousness of Christ alone is the foundation of it, and of our title to it. Let Christ's name be dear to you, "the Lord our *righteousness*." The Apostle Paul (2 Cor. iii. 5.) owns, that of himself he could not so much as think a good thought; but (Phil. iv. 13.) that he could do all things through Christ that strengthened him: and hence he exhorts us to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Let us think before we go to duty, from whence our strength for it must come, and study to fetch it in by faith and prayer; and when we are assisted, let us ascribe the glory to Jesus. Be assured, that your most costly sacrifices are unsavoury, if they be not perfumed with the fragrant incense of Christ's merit and intercession, and that your fairest righteousnesses are but as filthy rags in God's sight, if Christ's righteousness do not cover them. Let it therefore be your constant language, "In the Lord (Jesus) have I righteousness and strength," (Isa. xlv. 24.)

7. Begin and end every day with God. (Ps. v. 3, 4. 8.) Let prayer be the key to open the heart to God in the morning, and lock it against all his enemies at night. Let no Christian say, he cannot pray; for prayer is as necessary to him as breath. (Lam. iii. 56.) Let none say, they have not time for it; better take time from sleep than want time for prayer. Think it not enough to *say* your prayers; but *pray* in prayer, i. e. pray with sincerity and fervour. Think

with yourself, *this morning* may be my *last* morning, or, *this night* my *last* night; for certainly that morning cometh of which you will never see the night, or that night of which you will never see the morning. Let the conclusion of every day put you in mind of the conclusion of all your days, and that the long night of death will put an end to all your work, and bring you to a reckoning with your great Master for all you have done. O! to lie down every night reconciled to Him! O that we could lie down and leave our hearts with Christ, and compose our spirits so as if we were not to awake till the heavens were no more!

8. Sojourn in this world as travellers through it to another and a better country. "For here have we no continuing city." This is God's command, "Arise and depart, for this is not your rest." And, remember, if we would be right travellers towards Zion above, we must have Christ in our hearts, heaven before our eyes, and the world under our feet; we must take God's Spirit for our guide, his word for our rule, his glory for our end, his fear for our guard, his people for our companions, his promises for our cordials. Religion must be our business, prayer our delight, holiness our way, and heaven our home. Let Zion's travellers distinguish themselves from the men of this world. Let Christ always be precious to you, the word sweet, sin bitter, the world a wilderness, and death welcome. Let Christ's will be your will, His cause your concern, His success your joy, His cross your glory, His sufferings your meditation, His wounds your refuge, His blood your balm, His righteousness your clothing. Let your hearts burn with love to Christ: let it be your delight to think of Christ, to hear of Him, to read of Him, to speak of Him, and your highest pleasure to converse with Him.

9. Improve the talents God gives you for his service and glory. Remember, you were not made for yourself only, but for society and the benefit of others. Study, therefore, to be useful. Employ your gifts, your substance, and whatever God has bestowed upon you, for the good of your fellow-creatures; teach the ignorant, relieve the poor, strengthen the weak, comfort those that are cast down. Commend Christ as an excellent Master, and a loving Saviour, and invite poor sinners to come and see that the Lord is good. Pity those who are strangers to him, and pray for them.

10. Since God distinguishes you from others by his mercies to you, see that you distinguish yourself from others by your service for him. Are you a Christian indeed? Then you are more nearly related to Christ, and under greater obligations to live and act for him than others. Others have common mercies; but you have covenant mercies—mercies that accompany salvation. You *know* more of the things of God; you *profess* more; you promise and engage to do more than others. To *you*, therefore, the Lord Jesus puts the question, "What do ye more than others?" (Matt. v. 47.) Do you ask, Wherein should believers distinguish themselves for God? Answer,—You should testify against what is dishonouring to Him, by abstaining from *all* known sin, and from those sins that are common and fashionable, and little thought of by others. By reproving sin in others, and endeavouring to pluck them out of the fire. By keeping up family religion in the midst of business, and banishing all known vice from your dwelling. By keeping holy the Sabbath. By meek and lowly behaviour. By showing a special regard for those who are stamped with God's image, though mean or despised. By forgiving wrongs, and rendering good for evil. By paying great respect to God's word and ordinances. By being much and practically concerned for the enlargement of Christ's kingdom. By never venturing upon any known sin for the sake of worldly gain. By keeping a watch upon your lips, and praying for special grace to govern that most unruly member, the tongue. "Let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ." And by making conscience of relative and social duties, so as to be good husbands, good wives, good parents, good children, good masters, good servants, and good neighbours. "For the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, teacheth us, that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present evil world; looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." (Titus ii. 11—14.)

11. Study much the great Gospel lessons of denying yourselves and exalting the free grace of God. The de-

sign of the gospel is to cast down self and all idols, that God alone may be exalted; it is to make self nothing and God all, in point of wisdom, strength, righteousness, and glory. It is to take man wholly off himself, and to cast him on Christ for the whole of his salvation. It is a good sign of a saving change upon the heart when a man is thus humbled, and cast in the gospel mould, when self-loving is changed into self-loathing, self-admiring into self-abhorring, self-excusing into self-accusing, and self-seeking into self-denying.

12. Walk cheerfully and contentedly in every condition. What, though a believer in Jesus be fed with the bread and water of affliction, he has other bread and another cup to sweeten both. *The forgiveness of sin* is a reviving cordial in every case. Have no will of your own distinct from the will of God; but be resigned to his disposal in all things, and let his choice be always your choice. When you cannot bring your condition to your mind, endeavour to bring your mind to your condition, believing that the will of God is always best for you. Remember that He has engaged to be with you in all states and conditions, and to make all things work together for your good. He will not break, or be unmindful of, his covenant. His promises are the sure mercies of David. All things are yours, for ye are Christ's. Well then may you say, "Lord, choose thou mine inheritance for me?" And assure yourself, that it shall be done with infinitely more wisdom and love than if you were to do it for yourself.

13. Be watchful against all sin, and particularly the sin which most easily besets you. (Prov. xviii. 23. Heb. xii. 1.) Our adversary the devil well knows this sin, and on what side we may be attacked with the greatest success. He is sure to bring his strongest temptations thither, and to employ his most subtle wiles and devices that way to ensnare us. Happy for us, if we can say, we are not ignorant of his devices; and still happier shall we be, if we are enabled always to resist him, steadfast in the faith. A holy fear of departing from God, is a good mean to keep us from departing from Him. It becomes us to watch against all sin—sins of omission and sins of commission. Guard against those sins and evils now, in the time of health, that may put thorns in your pillow when sickness and the harbingers

of death approach—such as mispending of precious time, neglect of prayer or reading of the Holy Scriptures, formality or lukewarmness in religion, earthly mindedness, unthankfulness for mercies, or misimprovement of them. O grieve not the Holy Spirit of God by neglecting your convictions, falling from your first love, returning to those sins which you have mourned over, sinning against light, and after afflictions. Be always jealous of your deceitful and treacherous heart, knowing it is bent to backsliding. Endeavour to preserve always a watchful and tender frame of heart, and be afraid of falling away. Lie not quietly in any sin, but go to the cleansing fountain, and beg more strength and faith from Christ your Head.

13. Be looking and longing for the heavenly supper of the Lamb. (Phil. i. 23. Rev. xix. 9.) Those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, love his ordinances, and long for their return on earth, that they may enjoy communion with him. This makes them cry, "When shall I come and appear before God? My soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. Because thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee." Yet, these are but small foretastes of the felicities which are reserved for the saints above. "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." "He will bring me to his banqueting-house, (may every follower of Jesus say,) and his banner over me shall be love." He will feed me with the fatness of his house, and make me to drink of the rivers of his pleasure. O what is our drinking of the fruit of the vine here, to our drinking it new with Christ in his Father's kingdom above! Therefore look out, and long for the time when the day shall break and the shadows flee away, the marriage of the Lamb be triumphantly solemnized, and the whole church, his bride, be presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Blessed are they who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb! These are the true sayings of God. Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief. Amen.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

5.

No. 6

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE GREAT QUESTION ANSWERED.

BY REV. ANDREW FULLER.

Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas—And brought them out, and said, Sirs, WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED? *And they said,* BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, *and thou shalt be saved.* Acts xvi. 29—31.

THAT great numbers of people, even in this Christianized country, are ignorant of the way of salvation, is too evident to be denied. It is manifestly no part of their concern, any more than if they were in no danger of being lost, or such a thing as salvation had never been heard of. Nor is this true only of weak and illiterate people; men, who in all other concerns are wise, in these things have no knowledge or sense to direct them. The evil, therefore, cannot be ascribed to *simple* ignorance, which, as far as it goes, tends to excuse; but to being *willingly* ignorant, saying unto God, "Depart from us—we desire not the knowledge of thy ways."

God, however, has a witness in every man's conscience. Every man, whatever he may pretend, feels himself to be a sinner, and to need forgiveness. Ignorant and idolatrous as the Philippian Jailer had been all his life, yet, when

death looked him in the face, he trembled and cried for mercy. And if it was thus with the heathen, much more is it likely to be thus with those who have been educated under the light of revelation. The most careless and thoughtless cannot stand the approach of death. The courage of the most hardened infidel commonly fails him at that solemn period.

Reader! Are you one of the many who scarcely ever think of these things; and whose chief concern is, what you shall eat, what you shall drink, and wherewithal you shall be clothed? Let the anxiety of a heathen reprove you.

If you were made only to eat and drink, and enjoy life for a few years, and then to sink into nothing, you might well throw aside every care, except that which respects your present gratification. But you are of an order of beings distinguished from all others in the creation. In your nature are united mortality and immortality; the dust of the ground, and the breath of the Almighty. Life to you is but the introduction to existence, a short voyage which will land you on the shores of eternity. You are surrounded by a number of objects, and feel an interest in each. You build houses, plant orchards, rear animals, and form to yourself *a home;* but you are not at home. Your feelings associate with these things, but they are not fit associates for you. You may have a portion in all that is doing in your family, and in your country, yea, and in some sort, all that is done under the sun; but this is not sufficient for you. The time draweth nigh, when there will be an end to all these things, and they will be as though they had not been; but you will still live. You will witness the wreck of nature itself, and survive it; and stand before the Son of Man at his appearing and kingdom. Can you think of these things, and be unconcerned?

Or, though you be an immortal and accountable creature, (as your conscience tells you you are, whenever you consult it, and sometimes when you would gladly shut your ears against it,) yet, *if you had not sinned against your Maker*, there would be no cause for alarm. A sinless creature has nothing to fear from a righteous God. The approach of an assize, with all its solemn pomp, does

not terrify the innocent; neither would judgment or eternity inspire the least degree of dread, if you were guiltless. But you are a *sinner*, a corrupt branch of a corrupt stock. God placed, as I may say, a generous confidence in our species, and required nothing in return but love; but we have returned him evil for good. You, for yourself, are conscious that you have done so, and that it is in your very nature to do evil.

Or, though you be what is called a sinner, yet *if sin were your misfortune, rather than your fault*, you might fly for refuge to the equity of your Maker. But this is not the case. Whatever may be said as to the manner in which you became a sinner, and however you may wish to excuse yourself on that ground, your own conscience bears witness, that what you are, you choose to be, and occasionally reproaches you for being so. You may speculate upon sin as a kind of hereditary disease, which is merely a misfortune, not a fault; but if so, why do you feel guilt on account of it? Why do you not also acquit others of blame, where the evil is directed against you? You do not think of excusing a fellow-creature, when he injures you, upon any such grounds as you allege in excuse of transgression against God. If he be *rational, and his offence voluntary*, you make no further inquiry; but, without any hesitation, pronounce him criminal. Out of your own mouth therefore shall you be judged. The inability that you feel to do good, is entirely owing to your having no heart to it. It is of the same nature as that of an unprincipled servant, who cannot seek his master's interest, but is always defrauding him. You would not hold such a servant blameless. Nor will God hold you so. You are not destitute of those powers which render us accountable beings, but merely of a heart to make use of them for God. You take pleasure in knowledge, but desire not the knowledge of *his* ways;—in conversation, but the mention of serious religion strikes you dumb;—in activity, but in his service you are as one that is dead. You are fond of news; but that which angels announced, and the Son of God came down to publish, gives you no pleasure. All these things prove, beyond a doubt, where the inability lies.

Or, if sin should be allowed to be your fault, yet, if it were a *small offence*, an imperfection, that might be over-

looked, or so slight a matter, that you could atone for it by repentance, or prayers, or tears, or any effort of your own, there might be less reason for alarm. But neither is this the case. If sin were so light a matter as it is commonly made, how is it that a train of the most awful curses should be denounced against the sinner? Is it possible, that a just and good God would curse his creatures in basket and in store, in their houses and in their fields, in their lying down and in their rising up, and in all that they set their hands to, for a mere trifle, or an imperfection that might be overlooked? If sin were a light thing, how is it that the Father of mercies should have doomed all mankind to death, and to all the miseries that prepare its way, on account of it? How is it that wicked men die under such fearful apprehensions? Above all, how is it that it should require the eternal Son of God to become incarnate, and to be made a sacrifice, to atone for it? But if sin be thus offensive to God, then are you in a fearful situation. If you had the whole world to offer for your ransom, it would be of no account. Were that which you offered ever so pure, it could have no influence whatever towards atoning for your past guilt, any more than the tears of a murderer can atone for blood: but this is not the case—those very performances by which you hope to appease the divine anger, are polluted with sin. You are, whether you know it or not, *a lost sinner*, and that in the strongest sense of the term. Men judge of sin only by its open acts, but God looketh directly at the heart. Their censures fall only on particular branches of immortality, which strike immediately at the well-being of society; but God views the root of the mischief, and takes into consideration all its mischievous bearings. "Know thou, therefore, and consider, that it is an evil thing and bitter that thou hast done; that thou hast departed from the living God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord of hosts."

Finally. Though your sin be exceedingly offensive to your Creator, and though you can make no atonement for it, yet if you could *resist his power*, *escape his hand*, *or endure his wrath*, your unconcern might admit of some kind of apology. Surely I need not prove to you, that you cannot resist his power—what is your strength, when tried!

You may, in the hour of health and festivity, and when in company with others like yourself, indulge your pride, and boast great things; but if God touch you with his afflicting hand, your strength and your courage instantly forsake you. And will you go on to provoke Omnipotence? Canst thou *escape* his hand? Whither wilt thou flee? If, attentive to thy safety, the rocks could fall on thee, or the mountains cover thee, yet would they not be able to hide thee from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. God hath beset thee behind and before, and laid his hand upon thee. Whither wilt thou go from his Spirit? Whither wilt thou flee from his presence? If thou ascend to heaven, he is there. Or if thou make thy bed in hell, behold he is there!—The only question that remains, is, whether thou canst *endure his displeasure?* And this must surely be a forlorn hope!

Reader! Can thine heart endure, and thine hands be strong, in the day that he shall deal with thee? Think of the *wrath to come*. If it were founded in caprice or injustice, supported by conscious innocence, you might possibly bear it; but, should you perish, you will be destitute of this resource. Conscience will eternally say, *Amen*, to the justice of your sufferings. If you had mere justice done you, unmixed with mercy, your sufferings would be more tolerable than they will be; but if you perish, you must have your portion with Bethsaida and Chorazin. Goodness gives an edge to justice. The displeasure of a kind and merciful being, (and such is the wrath of the Lamb,) is insupportable.

If, after having heard these things, and lived in a country where they are fully declared, you do not feel interested by them, you have reason to fear that God has given you up to hardness of heart, and that the language of the prophet is fulfilled in you, "Go unto this people, and say, Hearing, ye shall hear, and not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive: for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Remember that in Old Testament times, when God blessed his people Israel with singular temporal blessings, he punished the

transgressions mostly with temporal judgments; but now that we are favoured with singular spiritual privileges, the neglect of them is commonly punished with spiritual judgments.

But whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, I will declare unto you the only way of salvation. That which was addressed to the Philippian Jailer, is addressed to you. "God has so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." He hath given him not only to teach us the good and the right way, but to be made a sacrifice for sin, and as such to be himself the way. He suffered from the hands of wicked men; but this was not all; it pleased the Lord to bruise him. He hath put him to grief, and made his soul an offering for sin. He commanded his sword to awake against him, that through his death he might turn his hand in mercy towards perishing sinners. He hath set him forth to be a propitiation to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. This is the only sacrifice which is well-pleasing to God. All that went before, were of no account but as they pointed to it; and all the prayers and praises of sinful creatures are no otherwise acceptable than as presented through it. It is not for you to go about to appease the divine displeasure, or to recommend yourself to the Saviour by any efforts of your own; but, despairing of help from every other quarter, to receive the atonement which Christ hath made. To this you are *invited*, and that in the most pressing terms. He that made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him, hath on this ground committed to his servants the ministry of reconciliation; and they, as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by them, pray you in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God."

The blessings of pardon, peace, and eternal life, are compared to a feast, or marriage-supper, which the King of heaven and earth hath made for his Son; and he hath commanded his servants to go forth, as to the highways and hedges, and to invite without distinction; yea, to compel them to come in. Nor is this all: you are exhorted and commanded to believe in Christ, on pain of damnation.

All your other sins expose you merely to the curse of the law; but the sin of unbelief, if persisted in, will expose you, like the barren fig-tree, to the curse of the Saviour, from which there is no redemption.

Say not in thine heart, "All these things I have believed from my youth up." You may indeed have been taught them, and have received them as a tradition from your fathers: but such faith is dead, and consequently unoperative. It is the same as that of the Jews towards Moses, which our Saviour would not admit to be faith. "If ye believed Moses, ye would believe me, for he wrote of me." It is no better than the faith of devils, and in some respects has less influence; for they believe and tremble, whereas you believe and are at ease.

But it may be you will say, "I have examined Christianity for myself, and am fully persuaded it is true." Yet it has no effect upon you any more than if you disbelieved it, unless it be to restrain you within the limits of exterior decorum. Your faith, therefore, must still be *dead, being alone.* Believing in Christ is not the exercise of a mind at ease, casting up the evidences for and against, and then coldly assenting, as in a question of science, to that side which seems to have the greatest weight of proof. To one whose mind is subdued to the obedience of faith, there is indeed no want of evidence; but it is not so much from external proofs, as from its own intrinsic glory, and suitableness to his case as a perishing sinner, that he feels himself impelled to receive it. The Gospel is too interesting, and has too much influence on our past and future conduct, to be an object of unfeeling speculation. It is "a hope set before us," which none but those who are "ready to perish," will ever embrace. To believe it, is to renounce our own wisdom, our own righteousness, and our own will, and to fall into the arms of mere grace, through the atoning blood of the cross. If the good news of salvation be not in this manner believed, it signifies but little what speculative notions we may entertain concerning it; for where there is no renunciation of self, there is no dependance upon Christ for justification; and where there is no such dependance, there is no revealed interest in that important blessing; but the curses and threatenings of God stand in all their force against us.

PART II.

Had the question, proposed by the Jailer, been addressed to the first genius upon earth, unacquainted with the Gospel, it could not have been answered. Had it been put to all the great philosophers of antiquity, one by one, and to all the learned doctors among the Jews, none of them could have resolved it to any good purpose. Nor amidst all the boasted light of modern times, can a single unbeliever be found, who could know what to do with it. Yet it is a question which arises in every man's mind, at one period or other of his life; and a question which must be resolved, or we are lost for ever.

Reader! This important question may have already occupied your mind. An alarming sermon, a death in your family, a hint from a faithful friend, or, it may be, an impressive dream, has awakened your attention. You cannot take pleasure, as formerly, in worldly company and pursuits; yet you have no pleasure in religion. You have left off many vices, and have complied with many religious duties, but can find no rest for your soul. The remembrance of the past is bitter; the prospect of the future may be more so. The thought of God troubles you. You have even wished that you had never been born, or that you could now shrink back into non-existence, or that you were any thing rather than a man. But you are aware that all these wishes are vain. You do exist; your nature is stamped with immortality; you must go forward and die, and stand before this holy Lord God!

If these, or such like exercises, occupy your mind, the question of the Philippian Jailer is yours; and to you let me address a few directions, included or implied in the answer.

If by this question you mean, What can you do to appease the wrath of God, or recommend yourself as a fit object of his mercy? What can you do as a good deed, or the beginning of a course of good deeds, in reward of which he may bestow upon you an interest in the Saviour? I answer, *Nothing*. An interest in Christ, and eternal life, are indeed given as a reward; but not of any thing we have done, or can do; no, not by divine assistance; it is

the reward of the obedience of *Christ* unto death. To us it is of mere grace, and as such must be received. Though faith is in itself a holy exercise of the mind, yet, as that by which we are justified, it is directly opposed to doing. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." He that worketh, seeks to obtain life and the favour of God, in some way or other, as a reward; but he that believeth, receives it as a free gift to the unworthy. And let me apprize you, that this is the state of mind you must be brought to, or you must perish for ever. So far as you think of doing any thing, call it what you may, with a hope of being pardoned and justified for its sake, so far you reject the only way of salvation, and have reason to expect your portion with unbelievers.

Let me deal freely with you. Yours is a most serious situation. The Gospel-rest is before you; and if you enter not in, it will be because of unbelief. You know the answer given to the Jailer; and this is the only answer that can with safety be given to you. Consider, and beware, as you regard your eternal salvation, that you take up your rest in nothing short of it.

But, in the first place, let me declare unto you the Gospel of God, which you are directed to believe. If this meet your case; if, rightly understood, it approve itself not only to your conscience, but your whole soul; if it accord with your desires, as it undoubtedly does with your necessities, all is well, and well for ever. I shall not trouble you with the opinions of men as to what the Gospel is, nor even with my own, but direct you to the account given of it by its Author. The New Testament informs us what it is, in such plain and pointed language, that he who runs, may read: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."—"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you *the Gospel* which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also *ye are saved*, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received,

how that *Christ died for our sins* according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures."—"This is a faithful saying, (a truth of such importance as to have become a kind of Christian proverb,) and worthy of all acceptation, that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners*, of whom I am chief."—"WE PREACH *Christ crucified*."—"I determined NOT TO KNOW ANY THING among you, save *Jesus Christ and him crucified*."—"THIS IS THE RECORD, *that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son*."

It is not meant by these brief descriptions of the Gospel, that there is no other truth necessary to be believed; but that the doctrine of the cross, properly embraced, includes all others, or draws after it the belief of them.

The import of this Gospel, is, that God is in the right, and we are in the wrong; that we have transgressed against him without cause, and are justly exposed to everlasting punishment; that mercy, originating purely in himself, required, for the due honour of his government, to be exercised through the atonement of his beloved Son; that with this sacrifice God is well-pleased, and can, consistently with all his perfections, pardon and accept of any sinner, whatever he hath done, who believeth in him.

What say you to this? The truth of it hath been confirmed by the most unquestionable proofs. It first began to be spoken by the Lord himself, and it has been confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles. The witness of the three in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, is borne to this; namely, that "God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son;" and to this also is directed the witness of the three on earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood. Can you subscribe to this great truth, in all its bearings, and rest the salvation of your soul upon it; or do you doubt whether you be so guilty, so helpless, and in so dangerous a state as this doctrine supposes? Is it as one of the chief of sinners that you view yourself; or does it grate upon your feelings to receive forgiveness in that humble character? In suing for mercy, are you content to stand on the same low ground as if you were a convict actually going to be executed; or does

your heart secretly pine after a salvation less humiliating, in which some account might be made of that difference of character by which you may have been distinguished from the vilest of men, and in which you might be in some degree a co-operator with God? Does that which pleases God, please you; or does your mind revolt at it? It meets all your wants; but none of your prejudices, proud thoughts, or vicious propensities; all these must come down, and be made a sacrifice to it. Can you subscribe to it on these terms?

I am well aware, that the great concern of persons, in your situation, is to obtain *peace of mind;* and any thing which promises to afford this, attracts your attention. If this Gospel be believed with all your heart, it will give you peace. This is the good and the old way; walk in it, and you shall find rest for your soul: but it is not every thing which promises peace, that will ultimately afford it. It is at our peril to offer you other consolation; and at yours to receive it.

Consider, and beware, I say again, as you regard your eternal salvation, that you take up your rest in nothing short of Christ! Particularly,

1. *Beware of brooding over your guilt in a way of unbelieving despondence; and so of standing aloof from the hope of mercy.* Say not, "My sins have been too great, too numerous, or too aggravated, to be forgiven." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from *all sin*." Believest thou this? You are not straitened in him; but in your own bowels. God's thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor his ways as your ways: as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his thoughts higher than your thoughts, and his ways than your ways. On the sinner that returneth to our God he bestoweth *abundant* pardon. It is not, "If thou canst do any thing, help me;" but, "If thou canst believe—all things are possible to him that believeth." Of what dost thou doubt? Of his all-sufficiency? He is able to save to the *uttermost* all that come unto God by him. Of his willingness? Ought not his gracious invitations to satisfy thee on this head? Can you imagine that he would proclaim, saying, "Whosoever thirsteth, let him come unto me and drink," and yet be reluctant to gratify the desires of those that come to him? Objections, on the ground of the great-

ness of guilt and unworthiness, may seem to wear the face of modesty and humility; but after all, it becomes you to consider whether they be any other than the workings of a self-righteous spirit. If you could find in your heart to accept of mercy as one of the chief of sinners, all your objections would vanish in a moment. One sees, in your very tears of despondency, a pining after acceptance with God, by something in yourself. Were they put into words, they would amount to something like this—"If I had but somewhat to recommend me to the Saivour, I could go to him with assurance; or if I had been less wicked, I might hope for acceptance." And what is this but making good the complaint of our Saviour? "Ye will not come to me, that ye may have life!" Such longings after something to recommend you to the Saviour, are no other than "going about to establish your own righteousness;" and while this is the case, there is great danger of your being given up to imagine that you find the worthiness in yourself which your soul desireth.

2. *Beware of dwelling, in a way of self-complacency, on those reformations which may have been produced by the power of conviction.* This is another of those workings of unbelief, by which many have come short of believing, and so of entering into rest. There is no doubt but your convictions have driven you from the commission of grosser vices, and probably have frightened you into a compliance with various religious duties: but these are only the loppings off of the branches of sin; the root remains unmortified. It is not the breaking off of your sins that will turn to any account, unless they be broken off *by righteousness;* and this will not be the case but by believing in Christ. The power of corruption may have only retired into its strong holds, from whence, if you embrace not the Gospel-way of salvation, it will soon come forth with increased energy, and sweep away all your fancied reformations. Nay, it is very possible, that while the *lusts of the flesh* have seemed to recede, those of the *mind*, particularly spiritual pride, may have already increased in strength. If, indeed, you dwell on your reformations, and draw comfort from them, it is an undoubted proof that it is so; and then, instead of being reformed, or nearer the kingdom of heaven than you were before, your character is more offensive

to God than ever. Publicans and harlots are more likely to enter into it than you. Besides, if your reformations were ever so virtuous, (which they are not, in his sight by whom actions are weighed,) yet, while you are an unbeliever, they cannot be accepted. You yourself must first be accepted in the Beloved, ere any thing that you offer can be received. "It does not consist with the honour of the majesty of the King of heaven and earth, to accept of any thing from a condemned malefactor, condemned by the justice of his holy law, till that condemnation be removed."

3. *Beware of deriving comfort from the distress of mind which you may have undergone, or from any feelings within you.* Some religious people will tell you, that these workings of mind are a sign that God has mercy in reserve for you; and that if you go on in the way you are in, waiting as at the pool, all will be well in the end: but such language requires great qualification. It is not your being distressed in mind, that will prove any thing in your favour, but the issue of it. Saul was distressed, as well as David; and Judas, as well as Peter. When the murderers of our Lord were pricked in their hearts, Peter did not comfort them by representing this their unhappiness as a hopeful sign of conversion; but exhorted them to *repent and be baptized every one of them, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.*

And thus it was with Paul and Silas, when the Jailer was impressed with fear and dismay: they gave him no encouragement from thence, but preached Jesus Christ as the only source of hope. If one who had slain a man in Israel, had stopped short of the city of refuge, and endeavoured to draw comfort from the alarm which he had felt, lest the avenger of blood should overtake him, would he have been safe? There is no security to you or to any man, but in fleeing immediately to the Gospel-refuge, and laying hold of the hope set before you. If you take comfort from your distress, you are in imminent danger of stopping short of Christ, and so of perishing for ever. Many, no doubt, have done so; and that which they have accounted waiting at the pool for the moving of the waters, has proved no other than settling upon a false foundation. Indeed it must needs be so; for as there is no medium, in one that has heard the Gospel, between faith and unbelief, he that does not believe

in Jesus for salvation, if he have any hope of it, must derive that hope from something in himself.

4. *Beware of considering faith itself the meritorious ground of acceptance with God.* It is true that believing is an act of yours, and an act of obedience to God. Far be it from me that I should convey an idea of any thing short of a cordial reception of the Gospel being accompanied with salvation: a reception that involves a renunciation of self-righteousness, and a submission to the righteousness of God. But if you consider it as a species of sincere obedience, which God has consented to accept, instead of a perfect one; and if you hope to be justified in *reward* of it, you are still "going about to establish your own righteousness" under an evangelical name. This is the commandment of God, that ye believe on the name of his Son. Faith is an act of obedience to God, yet it is not as such that it justifies us, but as receiving Christ, and bringing us into a living union with him, *for whose sake alone* we are accepted and saved.

Finally. *Beware of taking comfort from any impulse, or unfounded persuasion that your sins are forgiven, and that you are a favourite of God.* Many are deceived in this way, and mistake such a persuasion for faith itself. When a sinner is driven from all his former holds, it is not unusual for him, instead of falling at the feet of Christ as utterly lost, to catch at any new conceit, however unscriptural and absurd, if it will but afford him relief. If in such a state of mind he receives an impression, perhaps in the words of scripture, that God has forgiven and accepted him, or dreams that he is in heaven, or reads a book, or hears a sermon, favourable to such a method of obtaining relief, he eagerly imbibes it, and becomes intoxicated with the delicious draught. The joy of hope, being so new and unexpected a thing, and succeeding to great darkness and distress, produces a wonderful change in his mind. Now he thinks he has discovered the light of life, and feels as one that has lost his burden. Now he has found out the true religion; and all that he read or heard before, not affording him relief, is false doctrine, or legal preaching. Being treated also as one of the dear children of God by others of the same description, he is attached to his flatterers, and despises those, as graceless, who would rob him

of his comforts, by warning him against "the lie which is in his right hand."

I do not mean to say, that all consolation which comes suddenly to the mind, or by the impression of a passage of scripture, any more than by reading, or hearing, is delusive. It is not the *manner* in which we obtain relief, that is of any account, but *what it is that comforts* us. If it be the doctrine of the cross, or any revealed truth pertaining to it, this is Gospel consolation; but if it be a supposed revelation from heaven, of something which is not taught in the Scriptures, that is a species of comfort on which no dependence can be placed. A believer may be so far misled, as to be carried away with it; but, if a man have nothing better, he is still an unbeliever.

If ever you obtain that rest for your soul, which will bear the light, it must be not from any thing within you, but by looking out of yourself to Christ, as revealed in the Gospel. You may afterwards know that you have passed from death unto life, by the love you bear to the brethren, and by many other scriptural evidences; and from the time of your embracing the Gospel-remedy, you may be conscious of it, and so enjoy the hope of the promised salvation; but your first relief, if it be genuine, will be drawn directly from Christ, or from finding that in the doctrine of salvation through his death, which suits your wants and wishes as a perishing sinner.

Having thus warned you against certain by-paths, I shall conclude with a few additional directions concerning the good and the right way.

To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, is to receive him as he is revealed in the Gospel. Christ is God's first gift, with, or for the sake of whom, he bestows all others; and believing in him corresponds with it. If God first *give* Christ, and with him all things freely, we must first *receive* Christ, and with him all things freely. Hence it is said, "He that *hath* the Son, hath life, and he that *hath not* the Son of God, hath not life."—We must receive him as that for which he was given, which was to be a sacrifice, or propitiation for sin, that God might be just in justifying poor ungodly sinners who believe in him. We must trust in him as the sole ground of hope, and plead for pardon only in his name. Receiving Christ, as by a marriage-covenant,

we become one with him, and so are interested in all that he hath done and suffered on earth, and in all that he is now doing at the right hand of God.

But though believing in Christ has a special respect to him as the way of acceptance with God, yet, when you receive him as your atoning Priest, you will also receive him for your King. When you "come" to him, as guilty and heavy laden, for rest, you will at the same time "take his yoke upon you," and "learn his meek and lowly spirit." Though we are justified by faith *alone*, yet it is not by a faith *which is alone*, but which contains the seeds of universal obedience. In one view, namely, as receiving the Saviour, and uniting us to him, it *justifieth;* in another view, namely, as including the principles of a holy life, it *sanctifieth.*

In this way, Reader, you will find rest for your soul. In your journey to the heavenly world you will have much to do, much to oppose, and, it may be, much to suffer; but by a life of faith on him in whom you first believed, you will find strength equal to your day. Duties will be pleasant, temptations will be overcome, and the sufferings of this present life will work as a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

DEATH BY ADAM, LIFE BY CHRIST.

Our state by nature makes us tremble; but the grace of God, in Christ Jesus, gives us consolation. Oh! how precious and sweet must the gift of Jesus Christ unto eternal life be to us, when we rightly consider the sin of Adam, which hath reigned unto death! (Rom. v. 14.) Let us, with faith and repentance, embrace our Saviour, who came to deliver us from the consequences of the fall, and from sin and death, to destroy the works of the devil, and to bruise the Serpent's head.

Adam, by his fall, plunged us into misery; let us now fly to Jesus, who hath redeemed and saved us. Let us cast ourselves into His arms. He will sprinkle us with the blood of atonement for our sins, and bestow on us grace sufficient to change our hearts, and to establish them; a covenant firmer than that of nature; a happiness more lasting than that of the state of innocence. Superville.

No. 7

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE SCRIPTURES.

I DREAMED I saw Christ curing a distempered person. I immediately applied to him for my own healing. He asked in what respect. I answered, I want spiritual healing and forgiveness of sins.—He seemed to doubt whether I truly desired it. I fell upon my knees and besought him earnestly; on which he said with a gracious look, "Thy sins are forgiven thee; go and sin no more." I was transported at the words, and wept tears of joy in great abundance. My reflection on waking was, that I had as full assurance from the word of God of the remission of sins, and as plain a command to sin no more, as if it was spoken to me by a voice from heaven, or by Christ himself in person: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

St. Austin, in his Confessions, B. xii. chap. 26, delivers himself to this purpose: "If I had been enjoined by God to write the book of Genesis, I should have chosen to have composed it in such a manner for depth and eloquence, that they who did not understand creation, should nevertheless not be able to reject it for being above their capacity; and that whatever different truths any man, or number of men, might discover, or have discovered to them, should be contained in the conciseness of the text." This shows a vast reach of thought in St. Austin, and opens to us an amazing extent of truth in scripture, and seems to have been his real opinion of the book of Genesis.

The scripture is light and truth from God; a clue put into my hands by him, to guide me through the mazes of darkness and error; the instrument he works with in the

destruction of sin and purification of my nature; and if I do but receive it as such, I am sure he will bless it to me in such ways as he knows to be best for me. My only prayer to the Father of mercies and God of all consolation is, that he would give me a full conviction and certain apprehension of my faith and sincerity in the use of it; and all the rest, the measure of illumination, sensible comforts, and worldly accommodations I leave cheerfully to him.

Some people lie at catch with scripture, for examples or expressions to countenance their corruption.

The design of the Christian religion, is to change men's views, lives, and tempers. But how? By the superior excellence of its precepts? By the weight of its exhortations, or the promise of its rewards?—No; but by convincing men of their wretched guilt, blindness, and impotence; by inculcating the necessity of remission, supernatural light and assistance, and actually promising and conveying these blessings. And if it does not prove its divinity by its efficacy, let it be condemned as an imposture. This was one of its most operative convincing proofs at the beginning, and certainly is its greatest abiding proof.

The scripture sends me to my heart; and my heart, well known and considered, sends me back again to the scripture, with great advantage for the understanding of it.

It may be a dangerous snare to me, and I may go mourning all my life long, if I expect any thing from God that he he has never promised.

Eve was sadly mistaken in Cain, when she said she had gotten the man Jehovah, (the promised seed) and had got no better than a murderer. Perhaps this is a common mistake; and men think they have Christ, when they have nothing in them but the spirit of Cain.

If we had a voice from heaven, it would reveal no new scripture to us: it would send us to the law and the testimony. Why then should we not adhere to the word, and make a diligent use of it without? We should, if we believed it.

The religion of most men is fixed from nature, that is, worldly ease and convenience, before they come to the reading of the scripture. The consequence is plain. In all points where it exceeds their standard, it will be pared away.

With what a mixture of fear, reverence, and holy joy, should we open the Bible! the book of truth and happiness! God's heart opened to man! and yet the whole and every part of it secreted from him, and hid under an impenetrable veil, till he opens his heart to God.

Before the coming of Christ, the law and the gospel were in one, but the latter so hid under the former, that it was matter of some difficulty to discern it. After his coming, the gospel part of the law, was taken out of it and separated from it, and by being placed apart, in a conspicuous point of view, reflected back its own lustre upon the law, discovered plainly that it was in it, and gave it a strength and vigour which it never had before.

The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; consequently the wisdom of God is foolishness with man. The consequence of both is plain; all who adhere to divine wisdom and illumination, must necessarily be fools in the eye of the world. The scripture is unto us what the star was to the wise men; but if we spend all our time in gazing upon it, observing its motions, and admiring its splendour, without being led to Christ by it, the use of it will be lost to us.

Perhaps it may be a good rule in the reading of scripture, not to run from one passage to another, or suppose it a duty to read a certain portion of it every day, but to dwell upon particular passages, till they have in some measure done their office.

Every one should apply scripture to himself, as if it was written for him only.

Scripture-reading is a feast indeed, when we find in ourselves a disposition to receive it in truth and simplicity.

"Son of man, can these dry bones live? Lord God, thou knowest." Show me a thought so interesting, so profound, so impressive, and so well expressed, in a pagan author.

Poison secretly conveyed into an antidote must be fatal, because no farther cure will be looked for. How many themselves poison their great antidote—the Bible!

Look full at scripture, especially the beatitudes; do not be afraid of it, it is a sovereign cure for a sick soul; but then it must not be adulterated, as it is, with the spurious mixtures of human reason.

We go to commentators for the most part, because we

are afraid to take Christ and his apostles upon their own word. If we had a simple faith, we should seldom want others to explain their meaning.

It is an awful, dreadful thing, to come full into the light of scripture, and be upon a foot of sincerity with God.

Our spiritual progress is greatly hindered by running from one thing to another. When any thought, discovery, or passage of scripture, makes a strong impression, and, as it were, seizes upon the mind, consider it as of God, and give it time and opportunity to work its effect, by excluding every thing else for a season. It would be of infinite use to keep an exact history of such inward workings; their rise, continuance, declension, and revival; and the communication and comparison of many such histories, would not only afford matter of curious knowledge, great improvement, and mutual comfort; but, perhaps, be one of the strongest evidences of Christ's mission, and the truth of scripture.

The scriptures are so darkened with expositions, and buried under such a heap of rubbish, that it is a kind of labour even for the Spirit of God to remove it. The minds of the poor, not being sophisticated by the false glosses which obscure the plain sense of scripture, are in a much better condition for understanding it than the learned.

It is no objection to the truth of scripture, that so many different sects find their own opinions in it; for, first, If they were all agreed in their sense of it, and submission to it, the testimony it brings against the blindness and corruption of mankind would be weakened: secondly, It is no disparagement to a looking-glass, that all see something in it that is pleasing to themselves; the glass is true, the eye is partial.

It is said of Socrates, that when he believed he was divinely admonished to do any thing, it was impossible to make him take a contrary resolution. How does his example shame those who pretend to receive and believe the scripture as a divine direction, and yet for the most part trample it under their feet?

It is the great design of the scripture to teach the best to despair of being self-saved; the worst not to despair of being saved by Christ, and to offer to all the help they want.

The scripture was written to be transcribed into the

heart, and it has its effect when the heart is in such full consent and agreement therewith, that the scripture might have been copied from it.

It is impossible, in the nature of things, that so burdensome and expensive an institution as that of Moses, should ever have been received by the Jews, but upon sufficient evidence of its being divine. *See Stillingfleet's Orig. Sac.* vol. 2. c. i. p. 116.

The design of revelation is to inform mankind that they are in a state of ruin, and under the divine displeasure by reason of sin, and to propose the means of their recovery to the favour of God, and the hope of eternal life, by faith in a Redeemer, and submission to his teaching and authority.

Setting aside St. Paul, I should think Mr. Law right in his notion of regeneration; but when I look into the scriptures, I am sure he is wrong.

Many assent to the truth of scripture, and make use of it to paint their faces, but will not suffer it to get within them, nor come too near the heart.

How can I be discontented or low-spirited, want employment or enjoyment, when I have the scripture to go to?

I have the writings of a most invaluable estate in my hands, made over to me as my own property; and whenever I open the New Testament, and think of the unsearchable riches of Christ therein conveyed to every believer, I may look down with contempt on all earthly possessions, and deserve to forfeit my interest in the gospel treasure, if I do not.

There is but one kind of happiness in nature for intelligent creatures, viz. that by which God is happy: God is happy in his own will; therefore intelligent creatures can only be happy by their knowledge of, and conformity to, that will. The question, Where is this knowledge to be had? is easily answered; and the necessity of a revelation for this purpose, together with the helps it offers for bringing mankind to that conformity, appear at once.

All spiritual happiness is in God, and inseparable from him, and there is no possibility of the creature's receiving any but by being in him. The gospel only teaches the necessity of this union, and the precious means and mystery of it by Christ.

The mercy of God is the first article of every man's creed; but the different manner of understanding and applying it, makes an essential, infinite difference in the characters of men, and constitutes either religion or atheism.

I believe the universal immediate presence of God; that he is the foundation, life, and essence of all creation, and of every part and particle of it; or, in St. Paul's words, that he is above all, and through all, and in all; but still he is absent, and infinitely removed from me, unless I find him in my own heart. The greatest knowledge of his being and attributes will avail me nothing, if I do not also know him as my Father in Christ; and as such, favouring, loving, and blessing me, in time and to all eternity.

I do not think it is in the power of God to make any thing to be our happiness but himself.

The mercies of God refused, aggravate guilt, and draw on great ruin; but what then? Must not God therefore make a tender of his mercy? and must none be the better for it, because some will be the worse?

Nothing but love can unite with and enjoy love. The nature of God must be in use before it can be a good to us.

All glory is so properly and solely God's, that none can belong to any other; and whatever creature, man, or angel, takes any to itself, in so doing, discovers the nature, and falls into the condemnation of the devil.

What do I ask of God? Happiness confusedly? or himself as the only ground of it?

No rational creature can be truly happy in the enjoyment of any thing, so long as there is any thing better to be enjoyed. This thought, if true, leads directly to God.

The will of God is God; and to love one without the other is impossible.

If we look only at our fellow-creatures, we shall find, or take, but too many occasions of pride and self-exaltation.

The way to be humble is to look upwards to God. If we think greatly of his majesty, purity, and infinity of all excellence, it will give us such a striking view of our vileness and absolute unworthiness, that we shall think it hardly possible for any to be lower than ourselves.

The angels are swallowed up in the will of God, as their centre of rest and full enjoyment, and have not one thought

out of, or beyond it. If they should give their wills unto any thing else, but for a moment, they would lose their name, nature, and happiness.

Though God reveals his own character in his word, he reserves to himself the revelation of it to us by his word. Whenever he discovers himself effectually and savingly, the heart knows it is he, and not the mere word that hath done it.

I long to know more of that Being who made the world, and to whom I have so many obligations.

It is easy to say, Blessed be God in every thing; but where is the man that is always pleased with God?

How happy should we be, if we loved God but a little!

There is no possibility of happiness but in the will of God, and in the discovery of it as his goodness to mankind, and the only way in which he can communicate it.

"God and enough," says B. The reason why we never have enough, or know not what we would have, is because we neither have nor desire to have God.

If we had self-power, or could be self-saved, we should be gods ourselves: and therefore God, for his own glory, and to preserve us from this cursed idolatry, keeps all power in his own hands.

With us, commonly, sin is no sooner past than forgotten. To God it is alike present at all times, and he always sees us in the very act of what we did fifty years ago.

Those who do not choose to be like God, will certainly make God like themselves, as regardless of sin, and as little concerned to punish it as they think he should be.

God has made the only thing which constitutes our happiness, resignation to, and love of, his will, common to all.

"Forgive me all my sin:"—An unreasonable and shameful petition to any but God; for though all sin is infinitely aggravated by being against God, yet the only hope of sinners is, that it is against God.

We dishonour God greatly, and deny his nature, by not expecting great things from him.

God keeps us from much evil by the secret methods of his providence, or prudential considerations respecting our worldly interest or convenience, while in us there is no sanctification.

God sometimes suffers the temptation to be very great.

as in the case of Adam and Eve, and the prophet, I. Kings xiii. but his command is sacred, and the consequence of breaking it is terrible.

God's punishments and favours, though delayed, are as certain in his own time and manner, as his eternal unchangeable justice and goodness.

The highest angels know that they are kept in being, and supported every moment in their state of rectitude, by the will and power of God; and this sense of their dependence is their glory, perfection, happiness, song of praise, and the ground of their love and adoration.

God manifests himself in all his works, benefits, and blessings, and hides himself again in his providential crosses and afflictions, and the pains and sorrows of life. All is just as it should be: he tells us as plainly that we were not made for a happiness in this world, as he does that he made and governs it.

It is hard to say whether God manifests or hides himself more.

If God would give me all in heaven and earth, without himself, I should be extremely and for ever miserable.

I am bound to thank God for my being; for the continuance and support of my life; and for innumerable benefits respecting this world: but most of all for making me capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying him; calling me to this happiness, and qualifying me for it.

God is my maker, preserver, redeemer, sanctifier: Do I delight to consider him under these characters?

If I was to be assured that there is no God, or that he does not govern the world, nor regard what is doing in it, nor hear prayer, nor promise immortality and prepare us for it, how would it affect me? Should I think myself undone, as being deprived of all my hope and comfort; my best friend, and the dearest object of my heart?

God is my end, Christ is my way, the Spirit my guide.

God has the same knowledge, inspection, and care of every one, as if there was but one.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

N^o. 8

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

RELIGION, THE ONE THING NEEDFUL.

[From Doddridge's "Sermon on the Care of the Soul."]

If religion be indeed the truest wisdom, then surely we have the justest reason to say with Solomon, that folly and madness are in men's hearts. Is it the one thing needful? Look on the conduct of the generality of mankind, and you would imagine they thought it the one thing needless; the vainest dream, and the idlest amusement of the mind. God is admonishing them by ordinances, and providences, sometimes by such as are most awful, to lay it to heart; he speaks once, yea twice, yea, a multitude of times, but men regard it not. They profess, perhaps, to believe all that I have been saying, but act as if the contrary were self-evident; they will risk these souls and this eternity for a thing of naught, for that for the sake of which they would not risk so much as a hand or a finger, or a joint, no, nor perhaps a toy that adorns it. Surely this is the wonder of angels. and perhaps of devils too, unless the observation of so many ages may have rendered it familiar to both. And can we, my Christian brethren, behold such a scene with indifference? If some epidemical madness had seized our country, or the places where we live, so that as we went from one place to another, we should every where meet with lunatics, and see amongst the rest some, perhaps of the finest genius and improvements, and in the most eminent stations of life, amusing themselves with straws and bubbles, or wounding themselves and others, surely were we ever so secure from the danger of infection or assault; the sight would cut us to the heart. Surely a good-natured man would hardly be able to go abroad, or even be desirous to live among so many sad spectacles. Yet these poor

creatures might, notwithstanding this, be the children of God; and the higher their frenzy rose, the nearer might their complete happiness be. But, alas! the greater part of mankind are seized with a worse kind of madness, in which they are ruining their souls; and can we behold it with indifference? The Lord awaken our compassion, our prayers, and our endeavours, in dependence on divine grace, that we may be instrumental in bringing them to their right mind, and making them wise indeed, that is, wise to salvation.

How necessary is it, that we should seriously inquire how this one thing needful is regarded by us. Let me entreat you to remember your own concern in it, and inquire, Have I thought seriously of it? Have I seen the importance of it? Has it lain with a due and an abiding weight on my mind? Has it brought me to Christ, that I might lay the stress of these great eternal interests on him? And am I acting in the main of my life as one that has these convictions! Am I willing in fact to give up other things, my interests, my pleasures, my passions to this? Am I conversing with God and with man as one that believeth these things, as one has deliberately chosen the better part, and is determined to abide by that choice?

Observe the answer which conscience returns to these inquiries.

1. Let me address myself to those that are entirely unconcerned about the one thing needful.

Sirs, I have been stating the case at large, and now I appeal to your consciences, Are these things so, or are they not? God and your own hearts best know for what the care of your souls is neglected; but be it what it will, the difference between one grain of sand and another, is not great, when it comes to be weighed against a talent of gold. Whatever it is, you have need to examine it carefully. You have need to view that commodity on all sides, of which you do in effect say, For this will I sell my soul, for this will I give up heaven and venture hell, be heaven hell whatever they may. In the name of God, Sirs, is this the part of a man, of a rational creature? To go on with your eyes open towards a pit of eternal ruin, because there are a few gay flowers in the way. Or what if you shut your eyes? Will that prevent your fall? It signifies little to say,

I will not think of these things; I will not consider them. God has said, in the last days they shall consider it perfectly. The revels of a drunken malefactor will not prevent nor respite his execution. Pardon my plainness; if it were a fable or a tale, I might endeavour to amuse you with words, but I cannot do it where your souls are at stake.

2. I would apply to those who are convinced of the importance of their souls, yet are inclined to defer that care of them a little longer, which, in the general, they see to be necessary.

I know, you that are young, are under peculiar temptations to do this; though it is strange that the death of so many of your companions should not be an answer to some of the most specious and dangerous of those temptations. If there were the least degree of uncertainty, the importance is too weighty to put matters to the venture. But here the uncertainty is great and apparent. You must surely know that there are critical seasons of life for managing the concerns of it, which are of such a nature, that, if once lost, they may never return; here is a critical season. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart. This language may not be spoken to-morrow. Talk not of a more convenient season; none can be more convenient: and that to which you would probably refer it, is least of all so—A dying time. You would not choose then to have any important business in hand; and will you of choice refer the greatest business of all to that languishing, hurrying, amazing hour? If a friend were then to come to you with the balance of an intricate account, or a view of a title to an estate, you would shake your fainting head, and lift up your pale, trembling hand, and say, perhaps with a feeble voice, Alas! is this a time for these things? And is it a time for so much greater things than these? I wish you knew, and would consider, in what a strait we that are ministers are sometimes brought, when we are called to the dying beds of those who have spent their lives in the neglect of the one thing needful. On the one hand, we fear lest, if we palliate matters, and speak smooth things, we shall betray and ruin their souls; and on the other hand, that if we use a becoming plainness, and seriousness, in warning them of their danger, we shall quite overwhelm

them, and hasten the dying moment, which is advancing by such steps. O let me entreat you for our sakes, and much more for your own, that you do not drive us to such sad extremities: but that, if you are convinced, as I hope some of you may now be, that the care of the soul is that needful thing we have represented, let the conviction work, let it drive you immediately to the throne of grace, that from thence you may derive that wisdom and strength which may direct you in all the intricacies which entangle you, and animate you in the midst of difficulty and discouragement.

INGRATITUDE FOR MERCIES.

Consider, that God keeps an exact account of all the mercies you receive. He that could tell the prophet where his servant Gehazi had been, and what he had received from Naaman, will one day tell you to a farthing every talent you have received from him. God has a book for his mercies, and he means to reckon for all he has written there.

Also consider, How severely he hath dealt with those that never had so much mercy from him as yourself. If heathen are speechless in the judgment, when God reckons with them for their mercies, how much more confounded will those be who have lived under the Gospel dispensation. "They are without excuse: because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful." Rom. i. 20, 21. If the heathen that was not thankful for his penny, cannot lift up his hand in the day of the Lord, where wilt thou appear, that hast so many hundred talents to answer for? GURNAL.

Many plead for those opinions and notions upon which they would be loth to venture their souls in a dying hour. I value more the judgment of a dying saint about justification, than all the wrangling disputes of learned men.

T. COLE.

Welcome the Cross of Christ, and bear it triumphantly: but see it be indeed Christ's Cross, not thy own. WILCOX.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

N°. 9

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

MAN AS HE IS,

AND AS HE MUST BE.

Who is there almost that does not wish God was less pure in his nature, less strict in his commands, less exact in his justice, less terrible in his vengeance, than he is? And is not this wishing that he was what he is not, and disliking what he is? And what is this, if the soul durst speak out the horrid truth, but even hating God?

Nothing in nature is more unknown to man than himself.

There are few men upon earth, so despised, disregarded, and forgotten, as God is by the generality of men. "The peace of God passeth all understanding;" and yet when a few simple souls stand out, declaring boldly that they have it, but cannot explain it, all the rest of the world cries out upon them for fools and enthusiasts.

It is the common opinion with regard to natural evil, that it is sufficiently accounted for, if happiness prevails upon the whole; that this mixed state of things is unavoidable, and therefore no impeachment of the goodness of God; and that no man, or number of men, however miserable, have any right to complain, if happiness is the result of the general system. I do not understand this: it seems to be little less than blasphemy. How is it possible for so much as one conscious being to be miserable, but by its own fault?

If man is a sinner, why does he not believe it? And if he is not, why does he confess it? What a strange jumble of blindness and hypocrisy. We confess what we do not really believe, and yet really are what we confess.

We aggravate the faults of others, to have a pretence

for hating or despising them, and for the pleasure of self-comparison.

Striving against nature is like holding a weathercock with one's hand; as soon as the force is taken off, it veers again with the wind.

Whoever thinks he can acquit himself to God, has wrong notions of God, of himself, of duty, of sin. Either he considers God only under the single idea of mercy, or he knows nothing of his own great corruption, or contracts duty into a narrow compass, or fixes the guilt of sin at a low rate.

The happiest and most envied life, taken from childhood to old age, will not bear a review. There is not a year, perhaps not a month, perhaps not an hour of it, which a wise man would choose to live over again.

All our happiness as mere men, consists in forgetting ourselves. If we think, we are miserable.

A conscious, reflecting being, eagerly coveting happiness, and seeking it every where but in God, is the monster of the universe. God could no more make such a creature, than he can unmake himself.

We are as vain as if we were in full possession of our original perfection; and our being vain, is a certain proof that we are not.

An impatient desire to know, and have more than is proper for us in our present state, often hinders us from using what we have, and knowing what we might; and is to many a source of great delusion.

The heart of man pants everlastingly after distinction; and our pride only changes its appearance.

Mine, I find, is grown to a goodly size, under the show of humility.

God may say to every self-righteous man, as he did in the case of Sodom, "Show me ten; yea, one perfect good action, and for the sake of it I will not destroy."

So long as we think we are what we are not, and have what we have not, we can receive nothing at the hands of God; and reformation is impossible.

We can no more bear to be told of our faults by God than man; and if we durst not think it, are in reality as much disgusted at the one as the other.

What is the reason of the frequent uneasiness betwixt man and wife: and of their sometimes giving full scope to

their passions upon very trifling occasions; even amongst persons who behave with decency, calmness, and general good temper to all others? It is because they think their reputation safe in each other's hands, and therefore are not afraid to discover their natural sourness and malignity. This shows that neither love of rectitude, nor the fear of God, is at the bottom of that poor thing we call virtue, since we exert it least where it is most due, and where it would be most serviceable to ourselves, only because we think we can do so without disgrace.

The boasted demonstration of a future state of rewards and punishments, from the unequal distribution of things in this life, is annihilated upon the Christian scheme, which supposes all to be sinners, and, as such, liable to condemnation; and, therefore, whatever good we receive from God, in any period of our existence, is grace, and not retribution.

Charity does not oblige us to think any man good, because Christ says, "there is none good."

Observe man's depravity in his punishment. In our present condition we can only relish earthly things, and they all conspire to disappoint our expectations. There must therefore of necessity be a change both in the faculty and the object, if ever we be happy: and our business here, is not to accumulate riches, or fly from the sight of ourselves to amusements, but to acquire a true taste for things that are excellent.

Words cannot express the tormenting consciousness of a soul separated from the gracious influxes of God, and abandoned for ever to its ower poverty and impotence.

If we sought after truth out of pure love to it, and for the pleasure of it, as is pretended, we should not fear the great teacher, Death, as we do.

Nothing shows the vanity of wealth, grandeur, and pleasure, in so strong a light as the restless, ambitious spirit of princes. What do they want? and what would they have? Alas! the soul, conscious to itself of much higher pretensions, is not to be quieted with any thing these can give it.

It is the devil's master-piece to make us think well of ourselves.

Alas! who is humble? We disclaim perfection, and run down the preachers of it, from a general confused con-

sciousness of our unworthiness, but cannot bear to be told of a trifling error in conduct. What management, gentle insinuation, and nice art of address, is necessary to prevent resentment in such cases, even from a friend!

We are sinners by the corruption of the heart; and it is a fatal mistake to suppose that we are so only by the commission of sin. Our guilt does not then begin to exist, when it is brought into action, but to appear; and what was always manifest to God, is now become so to ourselves and others.

We cannot go to the bottom of sin without the convincing searching Spirit of God. If the work is to be our own, we shall deal so very tenderly with ourselves, that nothing can ever come of it.

It is said that riches, power, and distinction, are apt to corrupt the heart. The truth is, they find it corrupt, and all they do is to set men at liberty to act according to their nature, and thus add to the strength of it. But are not many persons humble, orderly, and well disposed in a low estate, who become insolent and insufferable in prosperity? They might be hypocrites in a low estate, and conceal their passions and tempers for various causes, but they never were humble or well disposed.

It would be a sad thing to think that we shall never be better than we are, or can make ourselves.

All men are naturally in a state of hostility with some, and ready upon occasion to be so with all, or any, wife or child not excepted.

The passions do not always torment us,—we could not bear it; but then the malignity of them is rooted in the constitution, though it does not always appear. As persons subject to fits, have the cause lurking within, though they have them not every day.

When we open ourselves to others, it is partially and hypocritically, with prevarication and great tenderness to ourselves, and with design to be admired and flattered by them, rather than counselled and convinced. Alas! we do so to God more than we are aware of.

Man is ever at odds with God about the condition of his acceptance. He fancies he has some resources in himself, some worthiness of his own, that, with a few grains of allowance, will bear him out, and rejects the aids of the gospel.

But the scripture is peremptory; he has none: "Without me ye can do nothing."

After the commission of sin, or any eruption of our inbred malignity, we quickly heal ourselves again, and reinstate ourselves in our own good opinion. How much better would it be to let our nature appear in its frightful nakedness, and to consider that the cursed root of all still remains, and that, if not here destroyed, in another world it can produce nothing but essential uninterrupted misery, when we have no longer the joys and comforts, cares and amusements of this life, to keep off the sight of ourselves!

If I bring my pride with me to the work of God, it will feed as sweetly upon it as upon any other distinction, and in the end fatally blast it.

We know we should be good, and therefore conclude at once that we are so; especially if we can read, and abound with notions. Our pride asks for no proofs.

Our being in this world given up to flesh and blood, is our fall. From the beginning it was not so. God and his angels see us where we are, with pity and concern. But man is positive that his present being, circumstanced as it is, was his original state; resolves to make the most of it; is almost equally fond of it, whether he laughs or howls out his time; never profits by his own, or other men's perpetual disappointments; and, in consequence of his mistake, dies worse than a brute.

Man has the worst qualities of brutes, without their best.

The observations I make upon the pride and corruption of my nature, instead of humbling me, only give me a handle to value myself upon my penetration.

It is to be feared, that a secret wish to be saved without holiness, is the great bar to our progress towards perfection.

Most men's notion of sin is only this, that whatever it is, they themselves are not guilty of it. None are so absurd as to think, that they do all they should do, or that they are guilty of no deviations from the rule of right; but that their state is sinful upon the whole, or that sin is damnable, they do not believe.

Our pride, as delicate as it is, can be content to feed upon that stench and corruption, which a little humility makes us nauseate.

The character of man is, proud sinner.

A creature made capable of knowing, loving, and enjoying God, and yet ignorant of him, and turned from him, or, which is all one, not turned to him in the bent of its will, desire, and affections, must necessarily be in a fallen state, and perverted from the end of its creation.

I do not want humanity, or social virtue. I can be honest and civil, and observe the law of kindness in my actions; but who shall give me humility, meekness, patience, inward purity, and the love of God?

Men do not want the devil now to tempt them into a belief that they shall be as gods, knowing good and evil: they are but too well persuaded of their own ability.

"Wilt thou be made whole?" is a trying question, when it comes to be well considered.

If I grapple with sin in my own strength, the devil knows he may go to sleep.

What can show man's horrid corruption in a stronger light, than that war should be lawful (if it be lawful) to prevent greater mischiefs?

All the difference between sin latent and breaking out into act, is, that man now sees what God saw before. And our compunction is generally for the discovery of it. We can feel sin in ourselves for years, and know that God sees it, with very little concern.

It is no uncommon instance of the deceitfulness of the heart, for men to venture upon the general contempt by becoming religious, and at the same time make all up to themselves by their own esteem, or the good opinion of a few. But to be universally despised, and to know certainly, by an inward feeling not to be evaded, that we deserve it, is not so common or so easy.

The appearance of religion only on Sundays, proves that it is only an appearance.

It is not the least innocent kind of ambition, to seek after praise in the way of religious usefulness.

Never a day passes, but the devil offers his service.

Mankind are perpetually at variance, by being all of one sect, viz. selfists.

We are undone by distinguishing time from eternity, and carrying on a separate interest for it. There are few who

do not disobey God in the capital instance ordained for their trial. The obedience we compliment him with, generally speaking, costs us nothing.

Our state and being in this world is our fall, and the loss of our paradise; and we may as well seek felicity in hell as here.

Who can value money at a higher rate, or pay dearer for it, than the man who gets and keeps it in opposition to the light of his conscience?

Human nature is like a bad clock. It may go right now and then, or be made to strike the hour, but its inward frame is to go wrong.

Our natural proneness to resentment, hatred, malice, never fails to show itself upon what we call a proper occasion; that is, when we can make a shift to flatter ourselves that we shall have the world on our side, and never more (O shame!) than in the cause of God and religion. The misfortune is in thinking that there ever can be any such occasion; and that we should ever think so, is sufficient proof of our corruption and unfitness by nature for our proper happiness.

It is strange we should not see the folly of putting ourselves in the power of others, for much the greatest part of our happiness: though we cannot help knowing that naturally they are more disposed to counteract it, and want to be pleased and humoured themselves as much as we do.

Certainly, in a general way, the best mere moral characters are only what any one may be, and all prudent persons at all times would be, if Christ had never come into the world.

Where is man's boasted rectitude, when he neither knows what he is, nor will accept of it when he does?

Flying with horror from the thought that we are unfit to die, if God should take us this day and hour out of the world, keeps off the discovery of our true state more than any thing else, and fatally hinders our preparation for it.

We are often so much concerned about the appearance of happiness, as never to cast one thought towards the reality of it.

Human virtue works no cure, gives no peace.

We would be happy in spite of God and nature, in failure

of duty, and with nothing about us but the grounds of misery.

If a man would know himself truly, let him consider what he is, and how he behaves where he has power; that is, where he thinks himself least obliged to dissemble.

When we see and judge rightly of the guilt and malignity of sin, still it is with a great reserve of tenderness for ourselves, and we chiefly mean the sin of others. Thus, instead of reforming, every one excuses one.

Reformation is the object we pretend to aim at, but we are perpetually mistaking the subject of it: it is ourselves.

It is dreadful (but perhaps not uncommon) self-deceit, to present ourselves before God with a lie in our mouths, and hypocrisy in our heart, or a secret unwillingness to be and to do as we pray.

Where almost is the man who does all he can, and all that Christ demands of him? It would fill the most pious soul with shame and confusion to be upbraided by him for what it might have done.

What ado is there to work up the heart to any liking of God? The reason is, we begin it of ourselves, and think to do it in our own strength; whereas it can only be done in faith, and the Spirit's power.

We are ruined by fancying we are what we know or read, or that we can make ourselves so in the turn of a thought; or if we do see and own a defect, yet thinking tenderly of ourselves when we are chargeable with horrid depravity, and absolutely unfit for God.

Man's holiness: much ado about nothing. If you would have a good opinion of your heart, keep the Holy Ghost out of it.

Every one may have observed, that in paroxysms of passion, or ill humour, the judgment is absolutely disabled; we are incapable of reasoning; keenly in the wrong, and very positive. It is not uncommon for persons to be thus blind in cold blood, and some all their lives.

Reason never discerns itself, or any thing else truly, till it sees its own impotence.

Some will mortify themselves in many things, and do almost every thing in religion but one; unfortunately, that

one is the test of their obedience, and the very thing required of them.

Let this be ever uppermost in my thoughts, and the great rule of my conversing with all, that we are immortal beings in the first stage of our existence, full of mistakes, or unconcerned about the matter, and yet dreadfully concerned in the issue.

Sense of an irretrievable error in life, fastening upon the mind, is a foretaste of hell.

We may find out the selfish stubbornness of our wills, unmortified desires, and earthly bent, in small crosses, when we do not in greater. Great crosses seem to furnish some excuse for complaint, and nature is more pitied than blamed for sinking under them; but small ones, fretting and galling us, afford no refuge against conviction.

Despair is the growth of pride, and not of humility. Why are we overwhelmed with doubts and fears? Because we are unworthy. Is it not plain, therefore, that we look for a worthiness in ourselves, which we neither have nor ever shall have?

Why are we more alarmed and concerned at breaches of duty to man than God, but because they are seen and observed? What then is our principle of action?

When men love and admire us, we think it is for some merit in ourselves, and for a natural working of pride can love them again. It is for the same reason that we love God so little, notwithstanding his superabundant goodness to us in Christ, because it lays us low, strips us of all excellence, and can only be received in a deep sense of our own unworthiness.

We are often more ashamed than grieved and humbled for our sins. Our own consciousness of them, and of God's being privy to them, does not pain us near so much as it would to have them known to others. See, therefore, whether what you call your penitence is not more pride than any thing else.

Why does the present hour come loaded with disgust, and lie heavy upon our hands, but because we know not what to do in it; or resolve to do any thing but what we should?

Not one in a thousand forms his plan of life, and pursues it steadily from principle and regard to the will of

God; if we did, there would hardly be an unhappy man in the world.

"God be merciful to me a sinner," said the publican. If I was to hear you wishing to be the man, I should hope well of your case; if you say you are, it is a hundred to one you are mistaken.

If you would know what your root is, consider how your virtues are in exercise towards God. You abhor the imputation of ingratitude; the meaning is, you would not have the world think that you are ungrateful; for, perhaps, you have not one spark of gratitude to your great Benefactor, your God and Father. You would not be false to the marriage-bed; but where is your fidelity to Jesus, the Lord and Husband of every Christian? And as to the point of justice, a most sacred virtue, and very high in your esteem, why must every creature have its due from you, and not God? and why do you think so little of what is his due? You honour the command of a man like yourself; but why are so many of God's commands slighted?

Learned men, and inquirers into nature, are bent upon knowing a great deal in this world, where we can hardly know any thing, and too often neglect the means of knowing every thing in another.

Wretched mankind! who, in your natural state, can only be happy in opposition to the will of God.

Every natural man's aim, in all he says and does, is first to gain his own good opinion, and then to appear better to others than he does to himself. The scripture doctrine of the fall and universal depravity of mankind, though not denied, has but little effect, because every man has a good opinion of one, and sees corruption only in others.

It is a full vindication of Providence, that every man may choose God for his friend and portion, if he pleases; and that so few do, is a full proof of the blindness, corruption, and degeneracy of mankind.

It is the great dispute of the world, and of every man naturally with himself, whether happiness consists in the commission or forbearance of sin; and most of those who declare for the latter, contradict themselves by their courses.

No one can boast of what he does, or ever think of bringing it to account, who considers what he does not do.

Not to sin, may be a bitter cross; to sin, is hell.

In respect of sin, I am where the plague is, see many sick of it, and in continual danger myself.

A wrathful passionate man is as mount Vesuvius, hollow, and stored with combustible matter, which is every now and then breaking out, to the terror and anguish of all about him.

God can save us only by his own power, for his glory, merely in a way of grace and favour, solely by Christ, to the end we may love, adore, and praise him; and yet the wish and will of man, notwithstanding the peculiar discoveries of the Christian religion, and the fullest conviction of infinite defect, is to be independent and self-saved.

I would gladly believe that the nature of mankind is not so bad as mine; and yet, when I observe the defects of the best of men, I find there is but little ground for any such hope.

One great mistake of the world, and the greatest bar to the happiness and well-being of mankind, rich and poor, is thinking that all the money we are possessed of is our own.

Perhaps many who think themselves high in Christ's school, have not yet begun with his A, B, C.

I fear nothing so much, and there is nothing I have so much reason to fear, as myself.

If sin had not brought death into the world, and Christ to the cross, we should never have known so much of the goodness of God as we do.

Sinning is so much a nature, and so close wrought into the constitution of man, that I can scarcely form a conception of existence without it.

I can no more root out the evil qualities of my soul by any volition, resolution, or efforts of my own, than I can think the stone out of my body.

O that I longed for the time of perfect deliverance, both of soul and body!

O that sigh! Do happy people ever sigh? I find I want something which God will not suffer me to have; and till we are of the same mind, life can be nothing at the bottom but one perpetual sigh.

We can take reproof patiently from a book, but not from a tongue. The book hurts not our pride, the living re-

prover does; and we cannot bear to have our faults seen by others.

We confess our emptiness to God in very strong terms; and when we have done praying, are apt to depend altogether upon ourselves.

It is a vain and impious thought to imagine that I can do any thing by my own strength. Dependence on God, in every single act of thinking and willing, is both my duty and security.

It may justly be questioned whether self-power can be communicated to a creature.

It is much easier to join one's self to a sect than to God.

The soul is naturally frightened, and shrinks from the thought of living only upon God and to God.

Submitting to the Spirit's operations, is like being laid naked upon a table to be cut for the stone.—Mortification carries death to the enemy of it, and is a stab at the heart. Nature's conclusion is, "Therefore, not to-day."

It is a sore trial to the soul, which knows any thing of itself, to come close up to God: he is light and truth, all love and purity; the soul dark, selfish, and sin-polluted.

The reason why we should draw nigh to God, and keep a continual intercourse with him, is the reason why we do not; we want his light and help, and this want is the very thing which makes us averse to him, and keeps us from him.

Man would be intolerable to himself, and look out every way for help, if it was not for his pride.

There is in the heart of man a deep-rooted covetousness; a subtile worldly spirit, suggesting diabolical, murderous thoughts, for its own ends.

If God did not take us to himself, few would go to him of their own accord.

"Why callest thou me good?" O man! why callest thou thyself good?

We see and know enough of ourselves, to dread the thought of being seen and known by others; and knowing that God sees us, and looking on ourselves without pain, self-condemnation, or one mortifying reflection, is a fatal symptom, and full proof of our spiritual deadness.

We get a glimpse of true wisdom, and know how we should live, perhaps an hour before we die.

N°. 10

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE GRACE OF GOD, AND A HOLY LIFE.

THERE is in many, a strange desire of separating what God hath joined together—the grace of God and the righteousness of man. One set of persons exalt the grace of God, and speak in the loftiest terms of the gospel of Jesus Christ; but say little of the duties of man and the obedience which is required of him: as if the bare knowledge of the gospel scheme were to be substituted in the place of true holiness; or as if it were wholly unnecessary to enter into the detail of that obedience which man ought to perform. Others equally unreasonable, insist exclusively upon the importance of moral practice, and view with jealousy every attempt to give prominence to the doctrines of grace; as if a blow were thereby aimed at morality, and as if the obligation to a righteous life were thereby undermined. Both are equally in error. The grace of God supplies a most efficacious motive to holiness; and holiness is the inseparable result of the grace of God, when it is received into the heart. The one is the means, the other the end. Can the end be answered without the means? Look at the success of those philosophising schemes of reformation which inculcated the beauty and the excellency of virtue, but applied no adequate motive to the mind. On the other hand, can the doctrines of Christianity be of any use, except as they conduce to their proper end? To allege this would be to degrade the gospel, since its superiority above every other moral system arises from its more powerful effects in meliorating the character and conduct of those who embrace it. In perfect harmony with this view of the subject we are told in scripture, that the Son of God gave himself

for us for the express purpose of *redeeming us from all iniquity, and purifying unto himself a peculiar people zealous of good works.*

In order, therefore, to acquire a just view of the Christian dispensation, we must regard a right system of faith, and a righteous and holy life as indissolubly connected. We must consider it as a vain attempt effectually to reform our conduct, unless we embrace the holy principles which Christianity inspires. And on the other hand, we must deem it unnatural, and even impious, to hold the truth in unrighteousness; to exalt the doctrines of the gospel, and to neglect the practical effects which these doctrines were intended to produce. Few indeed avowedly separate the doctrines of the grace of God from a righteous and holy life, but many do it practically. Many, who will fully admit the holy influence of the gospel, yet act as if the bare reception of its truths were a kind of compensation for, at least, what they would call the lesser sins of man. Hence, with a strange inconsistency, they will say, such a person is, without doubt, a religious man, but he is passionate. Another is exceedingly pious, but he is sullen and morose. A third is very devout, but he is worldly. Is it not plain that a separation is here made between religion and its practical influence? It is supposed that a man can be religious, and yet not gentle: pious, and yet not benevolent: devout, and yet not detached from the world. In the same inconsistent manner do multitudes reason, who are religious on the Sunday, while they are wholly engrossed with the world through the week: who can attend with the same punctuality the church and the theatre: who would not on any account neglect the preaching of the gospel, but in their families discover nothing of its benign influence: who very carefully settle the articles of their faith, and hold them strenuously; but take little pains to regulate their temper, evidently over-looking that necessary duty, as if it were no essential branch of religion. In a word, we are chargeable with the same inconsistency whenever the holy doctrines which we believe are not embraced as principles of action, influencing and regulating our whole conduct, teaching us how to feel, to act, to suffer, in our families, in our shops, in our retirements, in our converse with the world; in short, in all the various circumstances of life.

The inconsistency which I have been condemning, is greatly supported by our resting in general ideas of religion without entering minutely into the details of its duties; and by our being satisfied with approving generally of its doctrines without a particular application of them to our own cases and circumstances. On the other hand, nothing shows more decidedly a truly upright spirit than the full and complete manner in which religion is applied, with distinctness and particularity, to a man's own case, carried through all the business of life, and made to regulate every part of the conduct. It is an easy thing to express an admiration of the scriptures, to speak in high terms of an excellent treatise on religion, or to be loud in commendation of a pious discourse. But the only solid proof which we can give in either case of *cordial* approbation, consists in the close and faithful application of what we have read or heard to our own consciences; in the alteration we are induced to make in those parts of our temper and conduct which have been shown to be wrong; and in the abiding nature of the effects which, through the blessing of God, have been produced in us. Herod knew that John was a just and holy man; he heard him gladly and did many things because of him. But when John plainly applied his preaching to Herod's own case, and said it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife, then the insincerity of his heart appeared; he could not bear the application of the doctrine which he had previously professed to approve; and he put John to death.

The true remedy for this evil is the practice of close and diligent and daily self-examination; and the habit, not merely of reading the scriptures and hearing sermons, but of applying both, with fidelity, to our own circumstances. The words of a particular text are soon repeated: the propriety of the conduct it inculcates is easily acknowledged. But to examine its contents in detail, and to consider with attention, and with a view to ourselves, the temper and the practice which it enjoins, is a work of no small labour and self-denial. I trust, that none will think me presumptuous, if, with a view of lessening the difficulty, I should venture to propose a few questions which every individual may advantageously put to himself; and on his fair and honest re-

ply to which, as in the presence of God, ought to depend his judgment of his own state.

We acknowledge that man is a sinful and guilty creature, and that naturally his heart is "enmity against God." But are we conformably to this doctrine resisting that desire which we feel to be independent of God? and are we striving to bring every rebellious thought into subjection to the rules of his holy word? Do we feel that there is in ourselves an evil heart of unbelief which leads us to depart from God! and are we, therefore, afraid of loving other things better than God, of trusting to human support rather than to him, of honouring man more than God, and of valuing the world more than his favour? Is it our grief that we have hitherto served and obeyed God so imperfectly; and is it our serious wish and our sincere endeavour to honour him for the future, by setting him ever before our eyes, by making his will the rule of our actions, and his glory our end? What pains then are we taking to do this; and wherein do we show that we are in earnest about it? Unless we are daily and earnestly engaged in resisting and subduing that enmity against God, his law, government, and authority, which so much prevails in all by nature; what proof can we have of being right in our faith? Too many there are who, wholly selfish in their views and desires, seeking no farther to serve God than they think will be sufficient to prevent their incurring the dreadful effects of his displeasure. But are these true Christians? Certainly not. The object of the gospel is to teach us to strive against sin, to love God with all our heart, and soul, and strength, and to make his glory our aim in all that we do. This will readily be acknowledged. But let me ask, is it our unvarying endeavour to exercise that habitual regard to God which will influence us in all we say, do, or think? Does every thing bow in our esteem to the will and command of God? Do we adopt those principles and live that kind of life which we know God will approve; or is there nothing in either which we can alter for his sake? Do we labour to maintain in our minds a lively sense of his presence? Do we exercise a constant submission to his will, a constant dependence on his power, wisdom, and goodness? Are we habitually thanking him for the mercies we enjoy, ascribing them only

to his free and unmerited grace in Christ Jesus; and are we striving by some more substantial proofs than words to testify our gratitude to him? In our troubles, do we look to him alone for deliverance, resigning ourselves to his holy will, and even bearing affliction cheerfully for his sake? Do we value him as our chief good, as the only proper object of our happiness; and do we prove that we do so by preferring no gratification to his favour, by making every requisite sacrifice, and renouncing every evil habit, readily, for his sake? In short, do we set him before us as the witness of our actions, the judge of our conduct, the end of all that we do?

But let me now request my readers to take another view of the subject. They acknowledge, I doubt not, that this is a sinful world, and that therefore a Christian is not to be of the world even as Christ is not of the world, but is to make it his study to "mortify his members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry; for the which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." Now allow me to inquire, do we really believe this doctrine? Let us bring the matter to a point with our consciences. Are we renouncing the spirit of that world, whose friendship is represented as enmity against God? Are we crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts? Are we engaged in a secret warfare with all our evil inclinations, and labouring to bring them into subjection, that our hearts may be as a temple sacred only to Christ? If this is the case, how do we show it? Are we daily examining ourselves? With what perverse dispositions are we maintaining this struggle? Are we as much and as earnestly engaged in subduing ourselves, as in pursuing honour, wealth, or worldly comfort? In what do we deny ourselves? I ask not what open and public sacrifices we are making—vanity may prompt to these: nor whether we are imposing penances on ourselves—that is comparatively an easy task. But are we mortifying our vanity, curbing our pride, subduing our self-will, renouncing our love of consequence and power, giving up our own pleasure; and especially are we resisting our besetting sin? Many of the commandments of God, let it be remembered, it is both easy and creditable to fulfil. Herod himself seems to have executed these. But

he would not give up the gratification of a criminal passion, from regard to those doctrines of which he acknowledged, generally, the truth.

The due reception of the gospel farther implies the attainment of a meek and quiet spirit. Do we then control our anger? Is the power of religion clearly visible in the restraint which we put upon those ebullitions of passion, and expressions of peevishness, which would otherwise break forth? Can we govern ourselves under provocation? If others are angry with us, are we calm with them? But perhaps some one may say, "My passion is soon over." Yes, this is natural to you: but why was it not restrained by religion? "But has religion," it may be asked, "any thing to do with our petty quarrels and resentments, which are soon excited and soon allayed?" Yes, for religion consists in restraining these from a regard to God, and reverence to his law. True religion is an habitual restraint on every evil temper: a powerful principle which keeps under and subdues every other which stands opposed to it. It is a principle derived from God, and it should be exercised in the resemblance of him who was meek and lowly in heart, and who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered, threatened not.

Then as to covetousness: are our desires of worldly things moderate? Are we contented with our present station, or are we *impatiently* striving to be delivered from its difficulties? Are we apt to be cast down when we meet with disappointment, and easily elated by worldly success? Are we making the wealth or the happiness of this world our principal objects: or are these wholly subordinate to religion? In a word, are we more anxious to possess the favour of God and his peace in our souls, than to possess any earthly treasures? Religion, it is true, does not require that we should relax in the just and proper duties of our calling, or be less diligent, industrious, and frugal than others; but then, if we are living as men whose conversation is in heaven, and whose hearts are chiefly set on things above, we shall pursue our business with far less eagerness than others do: we shall be far more anxious that our children should be holy than that they should be rich. Our children themselves should be able to perceive that it would make us more happy to see them religious than accomplished or rich

I would further ask, what it is from which we derive our pleasures? Knowing how impure and polluting many of the sources of earthly pleasure are, and how apt to draw away our hearts from God; are we so indifferent to them, as to renounce them entirely whenever the interests of our souls require it? Are our pleasures derived from other and purer sources, sources pointed out and sanctioned by the law of God, which in this, as in every other particular, ought to be our guide and director? Do we consider eating and drinking as principal sources of gratification; or do we regard them in their true light, as necessary indeed to the support of our bodies, but at the same time as liable to become instruments of temptation, and hindrances to a holy and spiritual life, and therefore requiring to be regulated by the rules of strict temperance?

Thus also are we to guard against the inordinate love of an earthly object. We are to beware lest we should love even a wife, a husband, or a child, to such a degree, as to forget that God requires the chief place in our affections. In short, we must be habitually employed, would we really be Christians, in watching over and subduing every evil propensity; so that all the thoughts of our hearts may be brought into subjection to the will of God. To hear the gospel preached, to acknowledge its truth, to enjoy a measure of its comforts, is but a small thing. The essential business of religion consists much more in the secret warfare which I have described; in carrying our knowledge into practice, and regulating by it our daily conduct.

There is a class of duties which still remains to be noticed, I mean the duties of justice between man and man. The law of God with respect to these is, that we should do unto others as we would they should do unto us; nay more, that we should seek our neighbour's welfare as truly as our own, and some points even in preference to our own. Now how are we acting in this respect? We acknowledge the rule: are we following it? Can we withstand the temptation of profiting by the ignorance or carelessness of our neighbour? Shall we be able to say at the day of judgment, "it has been my rule in life to take no advantage of another?" There will be daily occasions of exercising the principle of true righteousness, if we are influenced by it. It will lead us to judge favourably of our neighbour's ac-

tions, and to defend him when unjustly accused; to rejoice in his prosperity, to sympathise in his distress, to supply his wants as far as we are able; and, above all, it will teach us to promote the welfare of his soul. There is nothing, perhaps, in which men are apt so much to pride themselves as in the discharge of their duty to their neighbour; and yet, when tried by the word of God, there is nothing in which they are generally more deficient.

If any one of my readers should object to this paper as legal, and as manifesting an ignorance of the grace of the gospel, I would entreat him to peruse the second chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to Titus. "Speak thou," says the venerable apostle, "the things which become sound doctrine." But what were the things becoming *sound doctrine* respecting which Titus was instructed to preach? They were the distinct and particular duties of aged men and aged women, of young women and young men, of servants and subjects. We see then how practical the preaching of Titus was required to be, and how particular also; not merely dwelling in generals, as too many are apt to do, and recommending holiness in a loose and vague way; but entering into the detail of the tempers which his hearers ought to possess, of the duties which they ought to practise, of the sins they ought to avoid: bringing religion home to their families and extending its influence to the ordinary business of life: regulating their whole conduct in such a manner as to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, and to command the admiration even of heathens. And to confirm this view of the matter, the apostle states it to be the very design of the gospel to produce in all men such a conduct as he had recommended. *For the grace of God hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly* in the government of our appetites and passions; *righteously* in the due discharge of the duties we owe to our neighbour; *and godly* in the conscientious fulfilment of the duties we owe to God: and that we should be ever looking forward, as the object of all our expectations and hopes, to the second coming of Jesus Christ, our God and Saviour.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

10.

N°. 11

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

"As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John iii. 14, 15.

In these words the way of salvation is set before us, in the plainest manner. The history of Moses lifting up the serpent, is related in Numbers, chap. xxi. The following is a short account of it; but you will do well to read the whole in your Bibles. The Israelites, while travelling from Egypt to Canaan, had offended God by their murmuring, ungrateful spirit. To punish them, God "sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people, and much people of Israel died." This brought them to a sense of their sinful conduct; and they desired Moses to pray to God for them. Moses did pray for the people; the Lord heard him, and commanded him to make a brazen serpent, and to set it upon a pole, in order that every one that was bitten might look upon it, and live. Now, Reader, attend to the important truths which this history teaches. As the bodies of the Israelites were bitten by the fiery serpents, so sin has wounded our souls, and poisoned every part of them. Our understanding, conscience, affections, will, memory, have all suffered. The poison runs through the whole soul, just as the blood runs through the veins, into every part of the body. "The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it." Isaiah i. 5, 6. And the effect of this corrupt nature, which we receive from our first parents, and which is called original or birth sin, are but too evident. They appear in our constant violation of God's holy law, in thought, word, and deed. Thus original

sin leads to actual sin. The tree is corrupt, and therefore the fruit is corrupt. And, though some may show the dreadful consequences of this poison more than others; though some may run greater lengths of sin than others, all go as far in transgression as God's restraining grace and their peculiar temptations and opportunities will allow. And, as many of the Israelites died of their wounds, so thousands of men and women are dying, daily, of the wound of sin. Yes, sin destroys both body and soul in hell. Reader, these awful truths should lead you to a serious concern for your immortal soul. But do you ask, Is there no cure? Must we despair? No; hear the joyful tidings of the Gospel. As Moses placed the brazen serpent upon the pole, for the healing of the wounded Israelites, so God lifted up his only Son Jesus Christ upon the cross, that guilty sinners might not perish, but have eternal life. There was no virtue in the brazen serpent, but it was God's appointment; and he was pleased to heal all who looked upon it; but there *is* virtue in a crucified Saviour. His death is a sufficient sacrifice for the atonement of our sins. His precious blood-shedding fully answers all the demands of God's broken law. He suffered as our surety, in our stead; and, when he cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" he was forsaken of his Father, that we might not be for ever banished from his presence in hell. Dear reader, know of a truth, that, sinful and guilty as you are, both by nature and practice, there is, in Christ Jesus, plenteous redemption. Not only is the crucified Saviour the appointed means of salvation for sinners, but he is an all-sufficient means. His precious blood is all the price which God requires, to redeem your soul from hell. His infinite merits, his perfect righteousness, will ensure your acceptance with the Father, and prove a good title to his glorious kingdom. Do you ask how these blessings may be made your own? I answer, that, as the wounded Israelite was healed, simply because he fixed his eyes on the brazen serpent, so you can obtain healing for your soul, and eternal life from Christ, only by faith in him. The Israelite looked to the brazen serpent, smarting with his wound, fearful of the consequences of it, despairing of all human help, and believing that God's way of healing would be successful. Now you must do the same. Have your sins

found you out? Are you no longer ("*dead* in trespasses and sins?" Ephes. ii. 1.) without any feeling of them, or sorrow on account of them? Do you see that, as a guilty sinner, you are in danger of everlasting death? Look then to Christ. Believe that he is able and willing to save you. Venture to trust wholly to his plenteous redemption, and you shall not perish—you shall have eternal life—you shall have the pledge and foretaste of it, in peace of conscience, the joys of God's Spirit, the delight of communion with him here on earth, and the blessed and lively hope of enjoying, for ever, his presence in a happier world.

Know, then, dear reader, that believing in Christ is looking to him, in faith, as "all our salvation, and all our desire." But do you ask what place we give to good works? I will tell you. They spring out of that lively faith in Christ, which alone justifies. I think this may be made very plain to you. Faith not only brings before our eyes the wonderful love of Christ, in his work of redemption, but enables us to see our part and interest in it. And when we not only believe that Christ died for a sinful world, but bring this truth home, and believe that he died for *us*, and put away *our* sins, then our hearts are filled with love to such a gracious Saviour; and, like dutiful and affectionate children, we desire to show our love, by pleasing him, and keeping his commandments. Thus, "faith worketh by love:" Gal. v. 6, and love leads to holy obedience; and thus we know in ourselves, that virtue has come out of Christ, for our healing: and thus we show to others, in our new life and conduct, that our spiritual health is recovered.

But it is only the convinced sinner who will value a Saviour, and look up to him for healing. The greater part of men, even of men called Christians, see no "beauty in Christ, that they should desire him." Isa. liii. 2. And for this plain reason; because they know not themselves, and feel not the wound of sin. Is this your case, reader? Unhappy soul! You are whole, in your own opinion, and therefore need not a physician. There is "balm in Gilead," Jer. viii. 22. ready for you; the heavenly Physician waits to heal you; but you look not to Christ, because you think you have need of nothing; or, perhaps, because you madly hope for healing in some other way; or, it may be, be

cause you are spending your days in awful indifference, and care for none of these things.

O! that you would now receive the warning of a friend, who fears lest you should discover your spiritual disease when it is too late to heal it. Sinner, look at Jesus! Too long have you "hid your face from him"—Too long have you "despised and rejected him." Isaiah liii. But "was ever sorrow like unto his sorrow?" Lam. i. 12. See his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion! Would he have borne these, if sinful man could do without him? Was he not wounded on purpose for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities? And is it not by *his stripes* that we are healed? Isa. liii. 5. Look then to "Him whom *you* have pierced." Zech. xii. 10. And learn, in the cross of Christ, the greatness of your sins, which required such sufferings, and the greatness of that love which was willing to bear them for *you*.

Look to the dying Saviour, 'till you learn to mourn and be in bitterness for those sins which pierced him; and 'till your hearts overflow with gratitude and love to the Friend of sinners.

ASKING FOR BREAD.

A father may deny his child bread to play with and throw under his feet, but will not refuse his starving child, that cries for bread to preserve his life. God can, and will, deny him that asks for the Holy Spirit to pride himself with the gifts; but he will not, and cannot, refuse the hungry soul that, pinched with his want of grace, humbly yet vehemently cries, "Lord, give me thy Spirit, or else I starve, I die." Christ himself tells us, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke xi. 13. Nay, these strong cries and earnest prayers for the Spirit, may be a sweet evidence that thou hast him already with thee. GURNAL.

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11.

N°. 12

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE SHEPHERD AND HIS FLOCK.

"He shall gather the Lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young."—Isa. xl. 11.

In a country village, chiefly inhabited by poor and illiterate people, lived a benevolent Christian Minister, whose name was Truth. Possessing an independent fortune, good ministerial abilities, and every Christian virtue, he obtained the love and esteem of the good; and the respect even of the ungodly.

The great business and pleasure of his life was to remove ignorance from the minds of his neighbours, the love of sin from their hearts, and the practice of sin from their lives. He succoured the needy, and consoled the mourner. And since his residence in the village, he had the happiness to see that God had blessed his labours to the conversion of many from the error of their way, and to the reformation of the whole neighbourhood. Instead of being employed in profane and idle sports on the Lord's day, the villagers were engaged in the services of religion, and through the week seemed to bear with them the influence of the truths they had heard, and the services they had attended.

But what will increase the esteem of my young friends for this good man, was the circumstance of his paying particular attention to the interests of the young. To acquaint the children of the village with the important doctrines of the bible, he had painted several representations of scripture truth; and established a weekly lecture at his own house for the purpose of explaining them. And, as might

be expected, he had the pleasure of seeing the little folks most constant in their attendance; because few are the children who would not leave their vain amusements to visit the house, and to see the pictures of such a man as Mr. Truth. But this was not all: most of them listened to his instructions with great attention, and some with lively interest and delight. This was manifested not only by their countenances while seated before him, but by their general conduct. They honoured and obeyed their parents and instructors, well performed their daily work, always spoke the truth, and acted justly towards all. And so strongly did the blessed subjects of Revelation engage their affections, that the amusements of childhood were slighted or despised by them; and their leisure hours were chiefly occupied in learning their appointed lessons, or in reading and meditation. Sometimes when the labours of the day were over, these little disciples would stroll together through the fields, or sit on the grave stones in the lone church-yard, and converse on the pleasing topics of Mr. Truth's lectures; or mingle their humble praises to the Almighty with the hallelujahs of heaven.

This source of inexpressible pleasure to Mr. Truth was considerably increased by his daughter, an only child twelve years of age, appearing at the head of this little band, and the leader in all their praiseworthy engagements. So good was her understanding, that she did not think herself at all disgraced by associating with those of meaner appearance than herself, if they were but well disposed; and so sincere was her love of goodness, that she would have preferred the company of the religious cottager to that of the ungodly heiress. Eager to obtain knowledge, and fond of meditation, she excelled many young ladies of more advanced age; and became the admiration of all who knew her. My little readers will not be surprised to learn that she was much beloved by her parents, nor that they afforded her every gratification which prudence and circumstances would allow. For it was no difficult nor painful thing for them to gratify her wishes. Some useful and interesting book, or other means of instruction, their approbation, the privilege of occasionally attending them in their visits to their friends, and of entertaining her associates at her own home, were the greatest of her earthly pleasures.

The entertainment which this young lady lately afforded some of her acquaintance, who happened to pay her a visit, so much pleased the writer, that he thought an account of it might afford his young readers both pleasure and profit; he therefore sat down, and penned for them the following pages.

The little folks who called were the two daughters of 'Squire Attentive, and their two cousins, Master and Miss Thoughtful, all of whom were under twelve years of age. After the usual inquiries respecting the health of their relations, the conversation turned on the funeral of Betsy Truelove, a little girl who had been one of the most attentive of Mr. Truth's youthful congregation, and who had lately died. "I asked my mother's leave to let myself and sisters go to see it," said Master Thoughtful, "and such pleasing, and yet affecting sight I never saw before. Her schoolfellows and companions that led the procession, and surrounded the corpse, by their white dresses, slow pace, and plaintive hymns, gave it a most interesting effect. The flowers they carried in their hands to strew over the grave, appeared a most suitable emblem of its approaching tenant; while the tears that now and then flowed down their cheeks seemed to bespeak their affection to the departed, and their consciousness of their own mortality. From the account I heard of her, I thought I should like to die as she died; and from what I saw, that I should not envy the rich man his well plumed hearse and pompous train of carriages to be attended to the grave as she was." "Yes, pretty dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Truth, "her life, death, and burial were far more honourable than those of many of the renowned among men. For the last twelve months of her existence, she brought me her weekly pence for the Bible and Missionary Societies; and, with such sweetness and humility, asked if she could not assist me in making some clothes for the poor, that quite delighted me. And during this period, out of that portion of her small earnings that her poor parents allotted her, to procure her clothes and reward her industry she placed in my hands half a guinea towards the support of these Societies. And, as by her example she had marked out the pathway to heaven in the latter part of her life, so in her death she appeared to have nothing to do but to assure those around, that she had not

been deceived in her expectation, that heaven was indeed the end of the way in which she had walked. She observed to those by her bed-side, "Solomon said, 'Better is the day of one's death, than the day of one's birth;' once I could not think how this could be; but now I quite understand it, and agree with the wise king. I have reason to bless God for the day of my natural birth; greater reason to bless him for the day of my new birth; but the greatest of all reasons to bless him for this day, the day appointed for my admission into the world of glorified spirits. All my days have been good days; but this is my best day." Here the good lady's heart interrupted her narration, and the tears started in her eye. Nor was she the only one that realized the departing moments and enviable feelings of little Betsy. A tear or two stole down the cheek of each of the visitors; while Eliza wept. "In her burial also," continued Mrs. Truth, "she was more like the first disciples of her Lord, than is the greatest monarch of the earth. Unadorned simplicity, and sincere affection, attended her body to the grave." "And what a pretty hymn her companions sung over her corpse!" remarked Miss Thoughtful, "I should very much like to have a copy of it; can you tell me, Madam, where I can obtain one?" "Yes, my dear," replied Mrs. T. "Eliza will give you one." Ever ready to oblige, Miss Truth went to her library, and brought her young friend this copy.

Come, children, and look at the grave,
Where low little Betsy is laid,
And learn, that *Time's* next rolling wave
May number us too with the dead:
In the morning of life we may die,
And, like Betsy Truelove, be borne
To the place, where forgotten all lie—
Fron whence we can never return.

But Oh! should we die without grace
To seek for God's pardoning love,
We never can get to the place,
Where Betsy is singing above:
Unless we are wash'd from each sin
Before we get up to the gate,
The Angels will ne'er let us in,
Nor pity our self-ruined state.

Is there nothing to comfort us then,
'Mid prospects so gloomy and drear?
O yes!—The kind Saviour of men,
In love and in pity draws near.
"Behold! little children," he cries,
"I'm come dying sinners to save;
"To wipe ev'ry tear from their eyes,
"And ransom their dust from the grave."

"There's room, in the arms of my love,
"For all that are weary of sin;
"There's room, in the mansions above,
"For all that love me to come in."
Then let us to *Jesus* repair,
His love and his power can save
Our souls from the gulph of despair,
And ransom our dust from the grave.

"I am glad," continued Mrs. Truth, "that it afforded you pleasure; and I hope you will soon have its sentiments deeply fixed in your mind. Perhaps you remember that Mr. Truth told the spectators, that death was to all a solemn and certain event, the moment of which none can foresee, nor retard; that, to the unholy, it cannot come too late; and that, to the sanctified, it cannot come too soon—it introduces everlasting misery to the one, and eternal happiness to the other?" "Yes, Madam," she replied, "while Mr. Truth pointed to little Betsy's grave, as containing a proof of his remarks, I felt the possibility of dying before my next birth-day arrived; and I secretly wished to be as Betsy was, that should that be the case I might become as she now is." "Well, my dear," replied Mrs. T. "I hope that wish led you to Jesus, who alone can prepare us for heaven, conduct and preserve us to its gates, and secure us an admission within its sacred walls. You know that he has promised to hear every prayer that is presented to him, and to grant every blessing that is needed by those who call upon him." "Yes, my dear mother," said Eliza, "had our young friend heard Betsy's simple and fervent prayers in health and in sickness, and witnessed her happiness while on her dying bed, she would have had a blessed proof of the truth of your remark." "But," observed her mother, "the greatest proof is yet to be seen by us, and to be seen in heaven,

Where, like a lily, ever fair she blooms,
To feel the chilling blast of death no more;
But spread her grateful praise, like sweet perfumes,
With kindred spirits through the blissful shore."

The tea was now introduced, at which the conversation was continued with increasing pleasure. And after the tea-things were removed, Mrs. Truth asked them if they would like to see 'The Shepherd and his flock,' the picture of which Betsy Truelove was most fond, and the last that Mr. Truth had painted. They politely thanked her for her kind offer, and manifested their desire to embrace it. She accordingly bid Eliza conduct them to the picture room, and explain it to them; and Eliza most cheerfully arose to obey her beloved parent, and to gratify the wishes of her visitors.

She led them into a large room half filled with forms, and hung round with pictures. But as there was a curtain drawn before each of them to preserve it from the dust, and to prevent the attention of the auditory being diverted from that picture which happened to be explained: my readers will not expect me to relate their several subjects. "This," said Eliza, as she drew back its curtain, "is the picture my dear mother referred to." Delight and admiration were visible on every countenance. "O what pretty little lambs!" exclaimed Miss Jane Attentive. "And what a kind looking Shepherd!" remarked her sister. "See! see! how those dirty pigs are rolling about in the mud!" exclaimed Miss Thoughtful. "And look how those dogs are worrying the sheep!" said her brother. "But do look, Cousin, at that cruel fellow who is setting them on!" said Miss Attentive. "See, sister," said Jane, "the Shepherd has got a little lamb in his bosom! how much he seems to love it!" "Yes, my dear," remarked Miss Truth, "he loves it in reality—indeed he loves all his sheep alike; but that little one, being less strong and courageous than the others, he kindly carries in his bosom." Like wise children, they requested to know the meaning of so charming a picture, and Miss Truth as kindly began as follows:—

"The *Shepherd* you see in the midst of the flock, represents THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, that great Shepherd of JEHOVAH's sheep, who came into the world in the days of

Herod the king of Judea, 'to seek and to save them that were lost.' Seven hundred years before he came, the Prophet Isaiah thus foretold the kind purposes of his visit, and the great work in which he should be engaged. 'He shall feed his flock, like a Shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.' And shortly after Ezekiel, speaking of him in the same character, said, that he should '*deliver* them out of all places where they had been scattered in the cloudy and dark day; that he should *feed* them in a good pasture; and *bring* them to their own land.' In the history of the Saviour's life on earth, and of his reign in heaven, we behold the accomplishment of these prophecies. We see him travelling through Samaria and Judea in search of his sheep who are lost in ignorance and sin till he finds them. He endures hunger, thirst, fatigue, and the cruel scorn and malice of wicked men, to give light to their minds and grace to their hearts—to translate them from the power of Satan unto God, from misery to happiness. To save them from eternal death, and to obtain for them the blessings of salvation, (those green, delightful, and everlasting pastures by which alone their souls can be satisfied and nourished here and in the future world) he laid down his life, and submitted to a cruel and shameful death. And to bring them to their own land, when he had arisen from the dead, and ascended to the throne of his Father, he sent forth his ministers to preach and diffuse the knowledge of his salvation to the ends of the earth, and his Holy Spirit to unfold and apply the truths of salvation to the souls of his people. Thus he prepares them to obey his call, and to follow him in the right way to the Celestial Canaan." "And does he journey with them to the end of the way?" inquired Miss Thoughtful. "Yes," replied Miss T. "he has promised never to leave nor forsake them; and indeed so necessary is his presence that without it they would faint on the road or wander from it, and be destroyed by their enemies." "But is he able to preserve them to the end of the way?" inquired Miss Attentive. "O yes!" replied her friend, "when an infant in the manger at Bethlehem, he was 'the mighty God;' and when at the age of manhood, he went about doing good, the elements, diseases, death, and Satan acknowledged him to be almighty. But

now he has received power and authority from his Father over all creatures and events, he is without doubt able to keep them from falling, to present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, and to take the most complete revenge on all their adversaries. This fact is represented by the *crown* of gold that he wears. He reigns in heaven: 'all the angels of God worship him.' His dominion also 'extends from sea to sea, from the rivers to the ends of the earth:' and even to the world of darkness and despair: 'he is King of kings and Lord of lords:' 'he has the keys of hell and of death'—nor men nor devils can do any thing without his sufferance, nor can Death shoot an arrow without his permission." "Of a king so mighty and glorious and yet so condescending, I never heard before;" observed Miss Attentive, "but will he live long enough to fulfil his intentions, and bring all his flock in safety to their own land?" "He is *immortal*, my dear friend," replied Miss T. "he has conquered Death, and lives in youthful everlasting bloom to die no more."

See! the glorious *Crown* he's wearing,
Tells us he's a *King*, tho' bearing
Little lambs, in love and pity,
To his own delightful City.

"The *crook* that leans against his shoulder, represents his GOSPEL, or the glad tidings of full, free, and everlasting salvation effected by him for those of the ruined sons and daughters of Adam, 'who believe in his name.' For many ages this gospel was preached to none but the Jews; but since the days of the Apostles, it has been sent to all 'the nations of the earth,' and has gathered to their Shepherd many, very many, of 'the children of God that were scattered abroad.' And still it shall be employed, for the same purpose, till not a wanderer remains in the wilderness. By this crook, Jesus gathers his sheep to himself, from sin, ignorance, and ruin, that they may know, love, obey, and follow him. And by the same means he restores those to the way of peace who leave 'the footsteps of the flock,' and wander in the pathway of transgression." "And do any leave so kind a Shepherd, and so beautiful a road as that within the railway, to walk among the dogs and swine, and tread upon the thorns and briers?" inquired Miss At-

tentive. "Yes," replied Eliza, "some are so foolish and wicked as to listen to the temptations of the devil, who promises them greater pleasure and advantage in the ways of sin than they possess in the path of obedience. But, as he is a liar and a murderer from the beginning, and only aims to deceive that he may thereby be the better able to destroy them, they soon perceive their error, and feel the sad consequences of their folly. Then they long and sigh to get back again to the good old paths, and to their Shepherd; but they fear the rage of the great adversary will be kindled against them if they attempt it, and that their Lord will not again receive them should they return. But by the Gospel the Shepherd removes these fears, and again invites them to his protection, saying, 'Return unto me, O backsliding children! and I will heal your backslidings.' They hear and know his voice, their fears are removed, and with weeping and supplication they return unto him, saying, 'Take away all iniquity, receive us graciously, and love us freely; so will we render the praise of our lips.' Their Lord fulfils his promise to them, and restores them to the blessed path and society of his flock." "But does he not correct them for their sin?" inquired Master Thoughtful. "Yes, sir," replied Miss Truth, "the fears and distresses they meet, while wandering and while returning, from their own consciences, from the sin itself, from the devil's bloodhounds, and from the thought of being rejected at last by their Lord, are very afflicting, and sometimes drive them to the borders of despair. And in addition to these, their Lord often chastises them by visiting their bodies with pain, their family with death, or by taking away their property or friends. Thus they are made to remember their folly to the end of the way, to take heed of Satan's devices, and to warn others of the sad consequences of leaving the narrow road.

"That *flock of sheep* which appears so white, and which is walking within the narrow railway, represents *God's children;* whom he calls his flock, and who confess themselves to be 'the sheep of his pasture.' They are washed in the 'fountain opened for sin and uncleanness,' and are 'clothed with robes of righteousness.'" "But what made them need washing?" asked Miss Jane. Miss T. replied, "The many sins they had committed, and the sin in which

they we conceived, made them unfit for the society and mansions of the blessed. Were it possible for but one of them to enter Heaven in his sins, he would appear there as one of us in a parlour after having fallen into a deep and miry ditch; none would be disposed to bid him welcome, all would shun him lest he should soil their snowy garments. But this is impossible; for the LORD has ordered *none* to be admitted through its gates who is defiled by spot or blemish, or any such thing." "But," inquired the same little girl, "in what fountain does he cleanse them? for they look as though they had never been dirty." Her friend replied, "In the fountain of his own blood, every drop of which he shed on the cross for this benevolent purpose. And so wondrous are the virtues of this blood, that it cleanseth the foulest among them from all their sins the moment they bathe beneath it. Therefore God addresses them in this gracious and surprising language: 'Come now, and let us reason together, though your sins are as scarlet they shall be white as snow; and though they be red as crimson they shall be as wool.' Thus encouraged, they wash their robes and make them white *in the blood of the Lamb*." "And is there no way of being cleansed from sin but this?" inquired Master Thoughtful. "No, Sir," replied Eliza, "if there had, God would never have delivered up his 'well beloved Son' to shame, torture, and death as a sacrifice for sin, the evil of which is so great, that all the tears of penitence that were ever shed, the good deeds that ever men performed, the sacrifices they ever offered, and the torments they ever did or can endure, will never atone for it, nor wash away its stain. How great then is the love of Jesus, in consenting to die for sinners! Like the pelican, which feeds her young with her own flesh till she dies in her nest, Jesus secures the life and welfare of his people by laying down his own." "Pray, Miss Eliza, why are God's people called sheep?" asked Miss Attentive. She immediately replied, "Because of the great resemblance they bear to them. In Eastern countries, where the Scriptures were written, the flocks were generally the *property* and *the inheritance*, as well as the charge of their shepherds. In the flocks and herds the wealth of the easterns chiefly consisted; and these were very seldom trusted to a stranger or a hireling; for neither of these could be

supposed to care so much for the sheep as for their own safety, and if they saw the ravenous wolf come to attack the sheep, it is highly probable that instead of hazarding their lives in their defence, they would flee away. But not so 'the good shepherd,' whose interests are most closely connected with those of his flock, he would even lay down his life in their defence, and dispute the possession of the weakest among them with every wolf in the forest: and therefore the owners or their sons generally took the charge of their flocks, and though of the greatest dignity they did not think it an unbecoming employment. Jesus applies these remarks to himself, in the tenth chapter of John's Gospel.—The sheep are his own—the purchase of his blood, and the inheritance given him by his Father. He takes their name upon him, and is called 'The Shepherd of Israel;' he dwells in the midst of them night and day; and he declares they shall never perish, and that none shall pluck them out of his hand. Further, it is said, that the eastern sheep *know the voice of their Shepherd*, and *their own names*. This does not appear surprising, when we are informed that their shepherds spend the greater part of their time, if not the whole of their lives, with them. And of his people Jesus says, 'My sheep know my voice, and they follow me; but a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers.' The Saviour calls his people from the society of the ungodly, to the company of the faithful; and they follow him in the way of holiness through persecutions, self-denial, and distress to the green pastures of his ordinances, of the doctrines and promises of his word, and of the sweet experience of his love. On them they gratefully feed till he bids them follow him through the dark valley of the shadow of death, to fountains of living waters, and to the more delightful pastures in the paradise of God. Then, with those of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, their bodies slumber in the fold of death, until the morning of the first resurrection, when from the pearly gates of heaven Jesus shall bid them rise to life and glory everlasting.

Then with triumphant songs, in shining forms,
Their slumb'ring dust shall wake and rise,
No more to *lodge* in the abode of worms,
But *dwell* with JESUS in the upper skies.

"Sheep are also *meek and harmless in disposition.* So the saints, who are conformed to the image of their blessed Master by the Holy Ghost, are 'meek and lowly of heart;' and far more ready to forgive than to revenge an injury; and to do good to their enemies than to do evil. Who can read the history of the first Christians, and not be convinced of this? We see them suffer wrong, with all the meekness of lambs; and we behold them persecuted even unto death, and hear them pray for the hell-hounds that thirsted for their blood and slew them. Sheep likewise *love the company of each other*, and neither herd with dogs, nor swine. In this respect also, the redeemed of the Lord resemble them, by coming out from the society of the children of this world, and joining the holy flock of Jesus. They do this in obedience to the divine command, and in agreement with their own views and feelings. They love each other, because they are born of the same Spirit, are washed in the same blood, are blessed with the same privileges, belong to the same Lord, and are journeying in the same path, through the same dangers, to the same home. But (to name the last feature of resemblance) sheep also *rank among the most interesting and useful of God's creatures.* We have all admired them as we have seen them feed on the heath, especially the young lambs as they have skipped about. And we have daily experience of the nourishment their flesh affords, and the comfort we derive from their wool. So the people of God, however they may be hated and defamed by the wicked, appear more lovely and valuable in his sight, and in the holy angels', than the sun, or moon, or stars; therefore he calls them his 'jewels,' his 'chosen ones,' his 'bride,' his 'peculiar treasure.' And the the angels fly to minister to their safety or happiness, when either is endangered." "Yes," said Miss Attentive, "I remember how ready they were to defend Elisha from the Syrian army that was sent to take him prisoner, and how effectually they defended him." "That is a very striking proof of Miss Truth's statement, Cousin," said Master Thoughtful; "but I recollect David and the Saviour assure us, that the honour of having an angelic guard through the world is given to all who fear God, even to 'the little ones who believe in Jesus.'" "I thank you for your just and suitable remarks, my dear friends," said Miss Truth, "and

to conclude this part of the subject, add that the saints shall soon appear to their enemies the most lovely and glorious of the divine creation. The curtain of heaven shall be lifted up, and from the dungeon of despair the ungodly shall see them seated on the Redeemer's throne, and crowned with eternal glory. But though saints are often accounted the off-scouring of all things, they are the most useful of all mankind, and are therefore called, 'the salt of the earth,' and 'the light of the world.' By their righteousness, they preserve the world from appearing and becoming as Sodom; and by their principles, profession, and example, they point out the path of safety through a world of danger, darkness, and delusion.

"The *action* of the sheep in walking towards the City on the top of yonder hill, is expressive of the children of God having no rest nor continuing city in this world; and of their being strangers and pilgrims here, seeking a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God."

They seek in Heaven a place of rest,
  Which Earth cannot afford,
Where they with saints completely blest,
  May love and praise the Lord.

And they shall find in Heav'n above,
  What they so much desire—
A rest of holy joy and love,
  Whose sweets can ne'er expire.

"That *little lamb*, the shepherd has in his bosom, represents A SOUL JUST BORN AGAIN—a little girl who wished to leave the country of the man in black, and go to the beautiful city, of which she had often heard. But as she knew nothing of they way, and had sought a long time in vain, she began to despair of ever reaching it. At length a good man told her of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was conducting a great many people to the same place, and who would most likely become her guide also. This news filled her with hope and joy; but recollecting her poverty, she exclaimed, "Alas, Sir, but I have nothing to pay him for his trouble;" "Do not let that discourage you from asking him, my dear," said the man, "for he is so rich that he does not care about money, and so kind as to take every

willing sinner there out of mere loving kindness and compassion. This fact he has caused to be proclaimed, in every part of the miserable country where you dwell. These are the words of the proclamation, 'Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters! and ye that have no money come ye, buy and eat; yea buy wine and milk without money and without price.' By this he not only makes known his readiness to receive such as you; but to *give* them every blessing without any reward." She immediately thanked the man, and went in search of the Shepherd, whom she soon found, and by faith and prayer, made her application to him, and told him all her heart. He smiled upon her with a look of love and pity, took her up in his arms and blessed her, and granted her request.—It was this part of the subject, that most forcibly struck the mind of Betsy Truelove, and became the means of her conversion. She followed the example of this little girl, and found the Saviour equally willing to receive and bless her.

See the little LAMB once fearing,
Is caress'd by love endearing!
Would you be by Jesus blessed,
And within his arms caressed?
Go and tell him, he will hear you,
And upon his bosom bear you,
Like the little lamb, so pretty,
To his own delightful city.

"Well," said Miss Attentive, "I thought he looked like a kind-hearted Shepherd?" "See," said Jane, "how he caresses it! O how I should like to be that little lamb!" Miss Truth resumed,

"*The man in black*, who is setting the dogs at the sheep, represents SATAN, the great and mighty adversary of God and man. He is painted in a *black* dress to denote his *nature* and his *end;* the former as being extremely and unalterably vile, and the latter as most dreadful. Not all the weepings and wailings of those he has enticed to ruin, ever soften his hard heart, or check him in his allurement of others; nor will all the beauty and goodness of the Shepherd and his flock ever lessen his hatred and opposition. By falsehood and cruelty he strives to destroy the harmless sheep; and promotes the practice of sin in the children of

this world. But, let us rejoice that God who is righteous and good, has appointed an end to his operations, a tremendous, but a deserved end, even 'the blackness of darkness for ever,' the everlasting flames of the fiery lake.

"The *dogs* represent the PERSECUTORS OF THE SAINTS, who, like their master, hate and oppose them because of their excellence. These characters were once to be found only among Idolaters, Mahometans, Jews, and Papists; but now they also exist among those who call themselves Protestants. "I admire the justness of this representation," said Master Thoughtful. "In their attacks, both these persons and the dogs are cruel and cowardly; and in their nature both are unclean. But from the height and closeness of the rails, it seems impossible for them really to injure the sheep." "That is the case," replied his friend; "and the Lord has so surrounded his elect with his power, that none can harm them while pursuing that which is good. And whenever they are terrified, he bids them look to him for protection, saying, 'Fear not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will help thee, yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.' And though heathens and papists have slain thousands of them, because of their love to religion, they have not destroyed one. No—their spirits are rejoicing in heaven, and their dust securely slumbers in the grave.

"Those *swine* represent THE CHILDREN OF THIS WORLD, who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; and who mind earthly honours and advantages more than the honour which cometh from above, and the treasures of heaven. You will find them at operas and plays, balls and fairs; employed in dancing, gambling, cursing, fighting, stealing and lying. In vanity and sin they spend their time, and heap to themselves wrath against the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God. They dwell in the country of the man in black, and are his most willing subjects. Those pigs in the mud-pond represent such persons as 'commit all iniquity with greediness;' and those at its brink represent others whose stings and checks of conscience will not suffer them as yet to lie down in sin. But, by a continuance in evil practices, they soon become so hardened, as quietly to mingle with the former characters." "And who do those lesser pigs which are fighting

represent?" inquired Miss Jane. Miss T. replied, "such little children and other persons as fight each other; and who, by indulging revengeful dispositions, are sometimes found to commit murder, and so come to a shameful and untimely end."

"And where do the subjects of the man in black go when they die?" asked the young gentleman. "They are turned into hell," replied Miss Truth,

> Where horror dwells, and midnight darkness reigns;
> Where sinners weep, and wail beneath their pains;
> Where Devils groan, and gnaw their burning chains.

And where they are tormented day and night for ever and ever." "Why are they sent there?" asked his sister. Her friend replied, "Because of their depravity of heart, and the wickedness of their doings. The former will for ever exclude them from heaven, and the latter shut them up in hell; for 'the wages of sin is death.' You know that God hath declared that he will render unto all according to their works;—that he will not justify the wicked, nor suffer the ungodly to stand in the judgment. And therefore immediately after death,

> From earth to heaven they rise not there to dwell;
> But hear their awful doom, and—sink to hell!

"*The narrow golden railway*, in which the Shepherd conducts his flock, represents THE WAY OF HOLINESS, that leads through this evil world to the celestial city. Its being *narrow* denotes the difficulty which is found in walking in it—none but those who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit *can* walk in it, and these are admitted through a gate, at the beginning of the way, called REGENERATION. For the Saviour said, 'Except a man be born again he *cannot* see, nor enter, the kingdom of God.' Its rails being made of *gold*, denotes its *beauty*, and its *value*. How pure and blessed are its paths! pleasantness, honour and peace attend on all that tread them. And how important is it! it is the only way to heaven.

The *City*, which stands on that high hill at the end of the narrow road, represents HEAVEN, that city of habitation which God hath prepared for them that love him. It is

built on *high* for the *security of its inhabitants*—no adversary nor distress can reach them there. It is surrounded by *glory* to denote its *splendour*—the King of Glory, mighty Angels, illustrious Saints reside within it: 'they have no need of the light of the sun nor of the moon; there is no night there.' By its *brightness*, we also learn the *perfection* and *happiness* of its inhabitants. Sin shall never stain their garments, nor grieve their souls again—they are made perfect in character, and in ability and zeal for the most exalted parts of the divine service, so that angels cannot look more fair, nor love more strong, nor praise more sweetly than the saints in heaven. They are happy—the hearty welcome they received at the celestial gate, the joy with which the Saviour presented them to his Father, the society in which he has placed them, the employ he has allotted them, and the treasures he has given them, fill their bosoms with eternal and transporting bliss." "And what are the treasures they possess?" inquired Miss Thoughtful. "Their extent has never been conceived;" replied her young instructor, "but they consist of the everlasting love and friendship of JEHOVAH, of the the Saviour, of Angels, and of each other: and all the blessed fruits and consequences of such a possession that they could possibly wish to obtain. Could they desire life, or honour, or wealth, or pleasure?—each and all of these are given them, even eternal life, a crown of glory, durable riches, and everlasting unmingled pleasures." "And what is their employ?" inquired her brother. Miss T. replied, "Adoration, thanksgiving, and praise. Filled with astonishment, humility and gratitude, they fall before the throne of God, and cast their crowns at his feet, saying, 'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.' They adore him as their Sovereign; they bless him as their Father and friend; and they praise him as the Source of all grandeur, beauty, excellence, justice, wisdom, purity, goodness, and truth, to themselves and to all other creatures. Their praise is the effect of love and admiration; and so loud and sweet, that it is compared to 'harpers harping with their harps,' and to 'the voice of great thunderings.' Millions upon millions of redeemed sinners, and holy angels, unite in this employ, and cause the far distant

walls of Heaven to resound with their melody, while they sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.' "And will the little girl represented by the lamb in the Shepherd's bosom, have a golden harp, and sing with them," asked Miss Jane. "Yes, my dear," replied her friend; "and not only that little girl, but every other that joins the Saviour's flock."

"That *dreary barren country*, represents THIS WORLD, which the Scripture calls a 'waste howling wilderness.' The *dirt* and *rubbish* denote the defiling and unsatisfying nature of its pleasures; and the *thorns* and *briers* the variety and number of its *cares* and *sorrows*. It is the haunt of Satan, who, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour; and it abounds with snares, and pits, and persons of savage and beastly dispositions. You know that through it are constantly heard the sighs of the oppressed, the lamentations of the mourners, and groans of the dying. Once indeed, it had a very different appearance;

> Trees of delicious fruit grew all around,
> While flow'rs of sweetest scent perfum'd the ground.
> The heav'ns spoke peace, the winds but whisper'd love,
> And gentle dews brought blessings from above
> To man, the fav'rite of the great JEHOVE.

But when man transgressed the law of his divine Maker, the ground was cursed for his sake, and yielded him nothing but thorns and thistles. Then those *clouds*, which represent THE WRATH OF GOD, were first spread over the land, and have continued to the present day. And, as soon as the sheep are all safely arrived at the heavenly city, they will burst in vengeance on the heads of the man in black and his subjects, and drive them into the gulph of perdition. Then will this awful threatening be fulfilled, 'I will rain upon him, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing tempest, great hailstones, and flames of fire,'—and then 'the world and all that is therein shall be burnt up.'" "Well, Miss Truth," remarked Master Thoughtful, "it is plain that all the subjects of Satan, the young as well as the old, are in a very dangerous and dread-

ful situation; and that none are safe here nor can be happy hereafter but the followers of the holy and blessed Jesus."

"Having thus explained the picture," said Miss Truth, "we will now if you please return to the parlour." To this, after taking another view of the picture, her little company politely assented. As they entered, Mrs. Truth inquired how they had been entertained? They individually expressed their admiration of what they had seen, and recounted the various parts that most engaged their attention; and then thanked her for affording them so great a treat.

Having partaken of some refreshment, and received an invitation to repeat their visit on Mr. Truth's next lecture evening, they sung the following hymn, and returned to their respective homes.

How happy the children, whose hearts love to sing
The praises of JESUS, their Shepherd and King,
Who ever hath lov'd them, and lov'd them so well,
As to lay down his life to redeem them from hell.

They know he's almighty, all gracious and wise,
And under his guidance march safe to the skies;
Though danger and sorrow attend on the road,
They cheerful press on; for it leads them GOD.

And soon, as the sun, in his kingdom they'll shine,
While crowns of rich glory their brows shall entwine;
With voices angelic they'll swell the loud strain,
An tune their sweet harps to '*the Lamb that was slain.*'

O let us, dear Saviour, this happiness share!
O kindly prepare us to dwell with thee there!
And we, with the blessed, for ever will sing,
Thy praise, mighty Jesus, our Shepherd and King!

Should the writer happen to be at Mr. Truth's on that evening, it is very probable that he will be able to present his readers with an account of the lecture. In the mean while, he hopes that the several truths contained in this brief recital will be remembered and thought upon by his young friends. And should he live to know that any *thoughtless sinner* has been led to the arms of the DIVINE SAVIOUR, through the means of these humble pages, his pleasure will only be exceeded by his reward. To this desirable end, may the Lord condescend to bless it, for Jesus Christ's sake, Amen.

AN INFIDEL'S TESTIMONY AGAINST INFIDELITY.

Colonel Ethan Allen was the author of a work entitled, "The Oracles of Reason," which was the first book published in the United States of America, formally directed against the Christian Religion. In Dr. Dwight's opinion, it was indeed a very flimsy and weak performance; but in boldness, dogmatism, and vulgar buffoonery, it was at that time quite unrivalled. He possessed a mere smattering of knowledge, but he was a fluent, coarse, and confident talker, and collected around him a circle of loose unprincipled persons, to whom his doctrines were peculiarly acceptable, and who looked up to him as an oracle. His zeal in the cause of infidelity he carried further than we believe is common, for he sedulously inculcated it on his own sons and *daughters*. One of the latter being dangerously ill, a Dr. Elliott was sent for to her assistance. He was introduced to the Colonel in his library; even at that moment, he could not abstain from bringing forward his infidel opinions, and produced some of his writings, which he read to the Doctor with great self-complacency, and asked, "Is not that well done?" While thus employed, a servant entered the room in considerable alarm, and announced to Colonel Allen that his daughter was dying. They rose immediately, and proceeded to her bed room. We ought to have noticed, that the wife of Colonel Allen was a professed believer in Christianity, and had instructed her daughter in its principles. As soon as her father appeared at the bed side, she addressed him with great solemnity, and in a state of visible distress, in these words: "I am about to die. Shall I believe in the principles you have taught me, or in what my mother has taught me?" He became extremely agitated, his lips and chin quivered, his whole frame shook, and after waiting a few moments he replied, "*Believe what your mother has taught you.*"

THE BIBLE IN THE MEMORY.

An Irish child being commanded by the priest, a short time ago, to burn his Bible, reluctantly complied; but at the same time said, "I thank God that you can't take from me the twenty chapters that I have in my mind."

N° 13

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Baptist General Tract Society.

THE TWINS.

A few years since, a man and his wife arrived in the town of M———, as permanent residents. They were young, lately married, and their prospects for futurity were bright and cheering. They purchased a farm in M———, which was then a new country,—and had happily spent two or three years in this situation, when, by a mysterious providence, the young man was called from this world. With his surviving widow, he left two lovely twin infants to deplore a loss which time could not retrieve. The widow sought comfort in vain from the limited circle of her acquaintance. There was no minister of the gospel in that region to direct her to the great source of comfort, nor was there a pious friend who could direct her trembling footsteps to the cross of Jesus. But she went to her Bible, and by the assistance of the Spirit of God, found that consolation, which a selfish world can neither bestow nor taste. She mourned indeed a husband, who was no more; but she was cheered by the hope that God would protect her and hers. She wept over her innocent babes, and resolved that while she lived, they should never need a mother's care. As they grew up, she endeavoured to teach them the first principles of religion, but they received only her instructions. One week after another rolled away—one Sabbath after another dawned upon the wilderness, but they brought none of their privileges. The wilderness had never echoed with the sound of the church-going bell. The solitary places had never been gladdened by the sound of the footsteps of him who proclaims "glad tidings of great joy." The feeling mother clasped her little boys to her aching bosom, and sighed and wept for the opportunity of taking them by the hand and leading them up to the courts of God. In the days of her childhood she had possessed great advantages, and she mourned that her babes could

only receive instruction from *her* lips. Alas! no missionary came to instruct—to cheer—and to gladden the bosom of her, who, for years, had never heard the whispers of love from the servants of her Saviour. When the little boys were five years old, and before they were old enough to be sensible of their loss, a consumption had fastened on their tender parent, and she was soon encircled in the cold hands of death. She steadily watched the certain issue of her disease, and even in her last moments commended her children to him who is a "father to the fatherless." A few moments before she expired, she tenderly kissed her little boys, who unconsciously wept on feeling the last grasp of the clay-cold hand of their mother. "It is hard," said she to a neighbour who was present, "it is hard for a mother to leave two such helpless babes without friends, and without any one to protect them; but I leave them in the hands of God, and I *do* believe he will protect them, and my last prayer shall be for my poor destitute orphans." After the death of their mother, they were received into the house of a neighbour. In less than a year, one of them was stretched beside his mother beneath the sods. About this time a pious lady arrived at the place. She too was an orphan, but was not comfortless. It was her first inquiry how she could do good to the poor villagers around her. During a solitary walk one afternoon, she met the other little boy straggling about the road. He was a beautiful flaxen headed boy, though exceedingly ragged. The young lady was struck with his appearance and entered into conversation with him. "What is your name, my little boy?" said she gently.—"James." "Where do you live?" "With widow ———, just in the edge of the wood, in that little log house, can't you see it?" "I see it; but is widow ——— your mother?" "No. I had a mother and she loved me. She used to take care of me and my brother John. She gave us clothes, and taught us our prayers and catechism. Oh! she was a good mother." "But where is your mother?" said the lady soothingly. "Oh! madam, she is dead, do you see the grave-yard yonder?" "Yes"—"and the great maple tree which stands in the corner of it?" "Yes, I see it." "Well, my poor mother was buried under that tree, and my brother John lies there too. They were both buried up in the ground, though mother's grave

was the deepest. I shall never see them again, never, never, as long as I live. Will you go with me and see the graves?" continued he, looking at the lady with earnestness and simplicity. The short account which the little boy gave of himself, awakened the best feelings of the young lady, and she had been devising some plan to do him good. For the present she declined visiting the grave, but continued to converse with him and gain his confidence. She found him very ignorant, having never been to school; and the instructions of a pious mother, having never been repeated or enforced by example, were nearly forgotten. A Sabbath School had never been established in the place, and whether it was practicable to establish one was doubtful—but she was determined to make the experiment. Accordingly she visited every little cottage in the village, and urged that the children might, the next Lord's day be assembled, and a school formed. A proposal of this kind was new and unpopular. All the old women in the place entered their protest against such innovations. For the first three Sabbaths the young lady had no scholars but her little James. But she knew that however faint may be our prospects of doing good at the commencement, we should not be discouraged. The first blow we strike may produce but little effect. The lady was sorry she had so few scholars, but she bent all her efforts to the instruction of the little boy. But in a few weeks, the prejudices of the people began to wear away, and before the summer closed, this school embraced every child whose age would allow it to attend. It was the second summer after the establishment of this school, and after little James had been well acquainted with his Testament and his catechism, that his health began to fail. The good young lady beheld his gradual decay with anxiety, visited him often, and always wept at parting with a pupil so dear. She used often to walk out with him, and to cheer him with her conversation. One pleasant afternoon she led him out by the hand, and at his request visited the spot where lay his mother and little brother. Their graves were both covered with grass, and on the smaller grave some beautiful flowrets. It was in the cool of a serene summer's day, as they sat by the graves in silence. Neither of them able to speak. The lady gazed at the pale countenance of the lovely boy, upon whose system a lingering disease was

preying, while he looked at her with an eye that seemed to say, "I have not long to enjoy your society." Without saying a word he cut a small stick, and measured the exact length of his little brother's grave, and again seated himself by the lady. She appeared sad, while he calmly addressed her. "You see, my dear Miss S——, that this little grave is shorter than mine will be."—She pressed his little white hand within her own, and he continued,—"you know not how much I love you—how much I am obliged to you. Before you taught me, I knew nothing of death—nothing about heaven, or God, or angels. I was a very wicked boy till you met me. I love you much, very much, but I would say something esle." "And what would you say," inquired the lady, trying to compose her feelings. "Do you think I shall ever get well?" "Indeed I hope you will—but why ask that question?" "Because I feel I shall not live long—I believe I shall soon die—I shall then be laid beside my poor mother—she will then have her two twins, one on each side of her—But do not cry, Miss S——, I am not afraid to die. You told me, and the Testament tells me, that Christ will suffer little children to come unto him, and though I know I am a very sinful little boy, yet I think I shall be happy, for I love this Saviour who can save such a wicked boy as I am. And I sometimes think I shall soon meet mother and little brother in happiness. I *know* you will come too, won't you? When I am dead I wish you to tell the Sabbath scholars how much I loved them all—tell them they must all die, and may die young; and tell them to come and measure the grave of little James. And then prepare to die." The young lady wept, and could not answer him at that time. But she was enabled to converse with him several times afterwards, on the grounds of his hope, and was satisfied that the little lamb was indeed of the fold of Jesus. She was sitting at his bed-side, and with her own trembling hand, closed his lovely eyes as they shut in his last slumber. He fell asleep with a smile—without a struggle. The lady was the only sincere mourner who followed the remains of the child to the grave, and while she shed many tears on the sods which covered his lovely form she could not but rejoice in the belief, that God had permitted her to be the feeble instrument of preparing an immortal spirit for a mansion in the skies.

N°. 14

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THE DISCIPLINE

OF THE

PRIMITIVE CHURCHES.

When the apostles, by the preaching of the word, had gathered in any place a sufficient number of individuals to the faith of Christ, it was their uniform practice, for the further promotion of his kingdom in that place, to form them into a Religious Society, or Christian Church. Being thus associated in the name of Christ, divine worship was carried on, Christian ordinances observed, holy discipline maintained, and the word of life, as the light by the golden candlesticks, exhibited. Among them our Lord Jesus Christ, as the high priest of our profession, is represented as walking; observing the good, and applauding it; pointing out the evil, and censuring it; and holding up life and immortality to those who should overcome the temptations of the present state.

Let us suppose him to walk amongst our several churches, and to address us as he addressed the seven churches in Asia. We trust he would find some things to approve; but we are also apprehensive that he would find many things to censure. Let us then look narrowly into the *Discipline* of the primitive churches, and compare ours with it.

By discipline, however, we do not mean to include the whole of the order of a Christian Church; but shall at this time confine our attention to that part of church-government which consists in—A MUTUAL WATCH OVER ONE ANOTHER, AND THE CONDUCT WE ARE DIRECTED TO PURSUE IN CASES OF DISORDER.

A great part of our duty consists in cultivating what is lovely, but this is not the whole of it; we must prune as well as plant, if we would bear much fruit, and be Christ's

disciples. One of the things applauded in the church of Ephesus was that *they could not bear those who were evil.*

Yet we are not to suppose from hence that no irregularity or imperfection whatever, is an object of forbearance. If uniformity be required in such a degree as that every difference in judgment or practice shall occasion a separation, the churches may be always dividing into parties, which we are persuaded was never encouraged by the apostles of our Lord, and cannot be justified in trivial or ordinary cases. A contrary practice is expressly taught us in the Epistle to the Romans; (Chap. xiv.) and the cases in which it is to be exercised are there pointed out. An object of forbearance however must be one that may exist without being an occasion of dispute and wrangling in the church: It must *not be to doubtful disputations*, ver. 1. it must also respect things which do not enter into the essence of God's *kingdom*, the leading principles of which are *righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.* ver. 16, 17. That which does not subvert the gospel of the kingdom, nor set aside the authority of the king, though it be an imperfection, is yet to be borne with. Finally, it must be something which does not *destroy the work of God*, or which is not inconsistent with the progress of vital religion in the church, or in one's own soul. ver. 20. In all such cases we are not to judge one another, but every man's conscience is to be his judge. ver. 23.

In attending to those things which are the proper objects of discipline, our first concern should be to see that all our measures are aimed at *the good of the party and the honour of God.* Both these ends are pointed out in the case of the Corinthian offender. All was to be done *that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord*, and to *clear themselves* as a church from being partakers of his sin. If these ends be kept in view they will preserve us from much error; particularly, from the two great evils into which churches are in danger of falling, false lenity, and unchristian severity. There is often a party found in a community, who, under the name of tenderness, are for neglecting all wholesome discipline; or if this cannot be accomplished, for delaying it to the utmost. Such persons are commonly the advocates for disorderly walkers, especially if they be their particular friends or relations. Their language is, "He

that is without sin, let him cast the first stone. My brother hath fallen to-day, and I may fall to-morrow." This spirit, though it exists only in individuals, provided they be persons of any weight or influence, is frequently known to impede the due execution of the laws of Christ; and if it pervade the community, it will soon reduce it to the lowest state of degeneracy. Such for a time was the spirit of the Corinthians; but when brought to a proper sense of things, what carefulness it wrought in them, yea what clearing of themselves, yea what indignation, yea what fear, yea what vehement desire, yea what zeal, yea what revenge. In opposing the extreme of false tenderness, others are in danger of falling into unfeeling severity. This spirit will make the worst of every thing, and lead men to convert the censures of the church into weapons of private revenge. Persons of this description know not of what manner of spirit they are. They lose sight of the good of the offender. It is not love that operates in them; for love worketh no evil. The true medium between these extremes is a union of *mercy and truth*. Genuine mercy is combined with faithfulness, and genuine faithfulness with mercy; and this is the only spirit that is likely to *purge iniquity*. (Prov. xvi. 6.) Connivance will produce indifference; and undue severity will arm the offender with prejudice, and so harden him in sin: but the love of God and of our brother's soul are adapted to answer every good end. If we love God, like Levi, we shall know no man after the flesh, nor acknowledge our nearest kindred; but shall observe his word and keep his covenant. And if we love the soul of our brother, we shall say, "He is fallen to-day, and I will reprove him for his good: I may fall to-morrow, and then let him deal the same with me." Love is the grand secret of church discipline, and will do more than all other things put together, towards insuring success.

In the exercise of discipline it is necessary to distinguish between faults which are the consequences of sudden temptation, and such as are the result of premeditation and habit. The former requires a compassionate treatment; the latter a greater portion of severity. The sin of Peter in denying his Lord was great, and if noticed by the enemies of Christ, might bring great reproach upon his cause; yet, compared with the sin of Solomon it was little. He first

gave way to licentiousness; then to idolatry, and on finding that God, as a punishment for his sin, had given ten tribes to Jeroboam, he sought to kill him. Cases like this are immediately dangerous, and require a prompt and decided treatment, and in which hesitating tenderness would be the height of cruelty. "Of some have compassion, making a difference; others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 22, 23. See also Gal. vi. 1.)

In all our admonitions regard should be had to the age and character of the party. An elder, as well as other men, may be in fault, and a fault that may require to be noticed; but let him be told of it in a tender and respectful manner. While you expostulate with younger men on a footing of equality, pay a deference to age and office. "Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father, and the younger men as brethren." (1 Tim. v. 1.)

In the due execution of Christian discipline there are many things to be done by the members of churches *individually;* and it is upon the proper discharge of these duties that much of the peace and purity of a church depends. If we be faithful to one another there will be but few occasions for public censure. Various improprieties of conduct, neglects of duty, and declensions in the power of godliness, are the proper subjects of pastoral admonition. It is one essential branch of this office to "rebuke and exhort with all long-suffering." (2 Tim. iv. 2.) Nor is this work confined to pastors: Christians are directed to admonish one another. (Rom. xv. 14.) Indeed there are things which a wise and affectionate people will be concerned to take upon themselves, lest a prejudice should be contracted against the ministry, which may prevent its good effects. This is peculiarly necessary in the settling of differences, in which whole families may be interested, and in which it is extremely difficult to avoid the suspicion of partiality.

In all cases of *personal offence*, the rule laid down by our Lord, in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, ought to be attended to; and no such offence ought to be admitted before a church till the precept of Christ has been first complied with by the party or parties concerned.

In many cases where faults are *not* committed immedi-

ately against us, but which are unknown except to a few individuals, love will lead us to endeavour to reclaim the party if possible, without any further exposure. A *just man will not be willing*, unnecessarily to make his brother *a public example*. The scriptures give peculiar encouragement to these personal and private attempts. "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins." (James v. 19, 20.)

In cases of *evil* report, where things are said of a brother, in our hearing, which, if true, must affect his character, and the purity of the church, it cannot be right to go on to report it. Love will not lead to this. Many reports we know are unfounded; or if true in the main, they may have been aggravated; or there may be circumstances attending the case, which if fully understood would make things appear very different from the manner in which they have been represented. Now it is almost impossible that any one but the party himself should be acquainted with all these circumstances, or able to give a full account of them. No time therefore should be lost, ere we enquire at the hand of our brother, or if on any consideration we feel that to be unsuitable, it would be proper to apply to an officer of the church, who may conduct it with greater propriety.

There are cases of a more public nature still, in which much of the peace and happiness of a church depends upon the conduct of its members in their individual capacity. The charge given by the apostle to the Romans, (chap. xvi. 17, 18.) though applicable to a church, yet seems to be rather addressed to the individuals who compose it. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." The characters to be *avoided* appear to be persons whose object it is to set up a party in the church, of which they may be the heads or leaders; a kind of religious demagogues. Such men are found, at one time or other, in most societies; and in some cases the peace of the churches has been invaded by strangers, who are not of their own com-

munity. Let the "brethren" have their eye upon such men. "Mark them:" trace their conduct, and you will soon discover their motives. Stand aloof from them, and "avoid" striking in with their dividing measures. In case of their being members, the church, collectively considered, ought, no doubt, to put away from amongst them such wicked persons: but as every collective body is composed of individuals, if those individuals suffer themselves to be drawn away, the church is necessarily thrown into confusion, and rendered incapable of a prompt, unanimous, and decided conduct. Let members of churches, therefore, beware how they listen to the insinuations of those who would entice them to join their party. Men of this stamp are described by the apostle, and therefore may be known, particularly by three things—First, by their doctrine; "it is contrary to that which has been learned of Christ." Secondly, by their selfish pursuits: "they serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies." Thirdly, by their insinuating whining pretences of affectionate regard towards their partizans: "by good words and fair speeches they deceive the hearts of the simple."

To this may be added, there are duties on individuals in their behaviour towards persons who lie under the censure of the Church. If they still continue in a state of impenitence, persist in their sin, or be irreconciled to the church's proceedings with them, it is of the utmost consequence that every member should act a uniform part towards them. We may, it is true, continue our ordinary and necessary intercourse with them as men, in the concerns of this life: but there must be no familiarity, no social interchange, no visitings to them, nor receiving visits from them, nothing in short that is expressive of connivance at their conduct.—"If any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, we must not keep company with such an one, no not to eat." (1 Cor. v. 11.) If individual members act contrary to this rule, and carry it freely towards an offender, as if nothing had taken place, it will render the censure of the church of none effect. Those persons also who behave in this manner will be considered by the party as his friends, and others who stand aloof as his enemies, or at least as being unreasonably severe;

which will work confusion, and render void the best and most wholesome discipline. We must act in concert, or we may as well do nothing. Members who violate this rule are partakers of other men's sins, and deserve the rebukes of the church, for counteracting its measures.

With respect to those things which fall under the cognizance of a church in its collective capacity, we earnestly recommend in general, that every thing be done not only with a view to the honour of God, and the good of the party, as before observed, but with a special regard to the revealed will of Christ. That some kind of order be preserved, in every community, is necessary to its existence. Decency, reputation, and even worldly policy, will induce us to take some notice of gross immoralities: but this is not Christian discipline: nor will it be productive of its salutary effects. In the choice of officers, few if any churches would elect a profligate: but if opulence be allowed to supply the place of spirituality, or ambitious or litigious characters be preferred on the principle of expediency, as a means of keeping them in better humour, is it not carnal? So, in matters of discipline, few churches would suffer a grossly immoral or litigious character to continue amongst them unnoticed: but if, instead of a calm, impartial and decided procedure, we enter into pusillanimous compromises with the offender, consenting that he should withdraw of his own accord; if the crimes of rich men be either entirely overlooked, or but slightly touched, lest the cause should suffer from their being offended; or if the misconduct of poor men be disregarded, on the ground of their being persons of little or no account, are we not carnal, and walk as men? Brethren! Are there any such things amongst us? Search and consider. Such things ought not to be. The private withdrawment of an individual, if it be without good reason, may justify a church in admonishing him, and, if he cannot be reclaimed, in excluding him: but it cannot of itself dissolve the relation. Till such exclusion has taken place he is a member, and his conduct affects their reputation as much as that of any other member. With regard to a neglect of discipline lest it should injure the *cause*, what cause must that be which requires to be thus supported? Be it our concern to obey the laws of Christ, and leave him to support his own cause. If it sink by fulfilling

his commandments, let it sink. He will not censure us for not supporting the ark with unhallowed hands. And if it be criminal to fear the rich, it cannot be less so to despise the poor. Let brotherly love abound towards both. Do all things without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

We cannot enumerate all the particular cases which fall under the cognizance of a Christian church, but shall mention a few which are recorded in the Scriptures for our imitation.

A DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH OF THE GOSPEL, OR ANY OF ITS LEADING DOCTRINES, is an object of Christian discipline. "I would they were even cut off that trouble you—I have a few things against thee, because thou hast them that hold the doctrine of Balaam—so hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.—A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition reject, knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." (Gal. v. 12. Rev. ii. 14, 15. Tit. iii. 10.)

It is worthy of notice, that the only passage in the New Testament wherein heresy is introduced as *an object of discipline*, makes no mention of any thing as composing it but *what relates to the principles of the party.* It may be supposed that those who were accounted heretics by the apostles were as impure in their lives as they were antichristian in their doctrine, and that they were commonly disturbers of the peace and unity of the churches: but however this might be, neither of these evils are alleged as the reason for which the heretic was to be *rejected.* All that is mentioned is this: He is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

He is "subverted;" that is, his professed faith in the gospel is in effect overturned, or rendered void; consequently he requires to be treated as an unbeliever. He is "condemned of himself;" that is, the gospel being a consistent whole, he who rejects some of its leading principles, while he professes to retain others, is certain to fall into self-contradiction; which, if clearly pointed out in a "first and second admonition," and he still persist, he will be compelled obstinately to shut his eyes against the light, and thus, "sin" against the dictates of his own conscience.

It has been asked by persons who disapprove of all church proceedings on account of a difference in religious principles, Who is to judge what is heresy? We answer, Those who are to judge what is immorality in dealing with loose characters. To suppose it impossible to judge what heresy is, or to deny that the power of so deciding rests in a Christian church, is to charge the apostolic precept with impertinence. It is true, the judgment of a church may be erroneous as well as that of an individual; and it becomes them in their decisions to consider that they will all be revised at the great day: but the same may be said of all human judgment, civil or judicial, to which no one is so void of reason, as on this account to object.

In CASES OF NOTORIOUS AND COMPLICATED WICKEDNESS, it appears, that in the primitive churches, immediate exclusion was the consequence. In the case of the incestuous Corinthian, there are no directions given for his being admonished, and excluded only in case of his being incorrigibly impenitent. The apostle determined what should be done—*In the name of the Lord Jesus when ye are gathered together to deliver such a one unto Satan.* We cannot but consider it as an error in the discipline of some churches where persons have been detected of gross and aggravated wickedness, that their exclusion has been suspended, and in many cases omitted, on the ground of their professed repentance. While the evil was a secret it was persisted in, but when exposed by a public detection, then repentance is brought forward, as it were in arrest of judgment. But can that repentance be genuine which is pleaded for the purpose of warding off the censures of a Christian church? We are persuaded it cannot. The eye of a true penitent will be fixed on the greatness of his sin, and he will be the last to discern or talk of his repentance for it. So far from pleading it, in order to evade censure, he will censure himself, and desire nothing more than that testimony may be borne against his conduct for the honour of Christ.

But allowing that repentance in such cases is sincere, still it is not of such account as to set aside the necessity of exclusion. The end to be answered by this measure is not merely the good of the party, but the "clearing" of a Christian church from the very appearance of conniving at

immorality; and which cannot be accomplished by repentance only. Though *Miriam* might be truly sorry for her sin in having spoken against Moses, and though she might be healed of her leprosy; yet *the Lord said unto Moses, if her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days; and after that let her be received in again.* (Numb. xii. 14.)

We do not suppose, however, that *every* notorious fault requires immediate exclusion. The general rule given is—that NOTORIOUS EVILS SHOULD MEET WITH A PUBLIC REBUKE. *Them that sin, rebuke before all, that others also may fear.* (1 Tim. v. 20.) But this proceeding does not appear to amount to exclusion; it is rather of the nature of a *censure* or *reprimand*, accompanying an admonition. To us it appears that the circumstances attending a sin, ought to determine whether it require immediate exclusion or not. If these be highly aggravating; if there appear to have been premeditation, intention, and perseverance in the crime, *put away from amongst yourselves that wicked person:* but if circumstances extenuate, rather than heighten the evil, solemn admonition, accompanied with rebuke, ought to suffice, and no exclusion to follow but in case of incorrigible impenitence.

There are also faults which do not come under the denomination of notorious sins, wherein directions are given for recovering the offenders WITHOUT ANY MENTION BEING MADE OF EXCLUSION, EITHER IMMEDIATE OR ULTIMATE. There is perhaps in all the churches a description of men whose characters are far from being uniformly circumspect, and yet not sufficiently irregular to warrant their being separated from communion. They are disorderly walkers; busy-bodies in other men's matters, while negligent of their own; in a word, unamiable characters. Now those that are such we are directed to exhort, and charge that they conduct themselves as becometh Christians. If after this they continue disorderly, observe a degree of distance in your conduct towards them; withdraw your intimacy; let them feel the frowns of their brethren: yet be not wholly reserved, but occasionally explain to them the reasons of your conduct, affectionately admonishing them at the same time to repentance and amendment of life.

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.—For we hear that there are some who walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. Now them that are such we command, and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread. And if any obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him that he may be ashamed: yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." (2 Thess. iii. 6—15.) If churches were to consult only their own reputation, they would often discard such persons at an early period: but where there is reason to hope that the heart is right in the main, great forbearance must be exercised, and long perseverance in endeavouring to recover. How many imperfections were discovered in the conduct of the twelve apostles, while their Lord was with them, and what an example of forbearance has he left us! One character reclaimed is of greater account and more to the honour of a Christian church, than many discarded.

Finally, a watchful eye upon the state of the church, and of particular members, with a seasonable interposition, may do more towards the preservation of good order than all other things put together. Discourage whisperings, backbitings, and jealousies. Frown on tale bearers, and give no ear to their tales. Nip contentions in the bud. Adjust differences in civil matters among yourselves. Bring together at an early period those in whom misconception and distrust have begun to operate, ere ill opinion ripen into settled dislike. By a frank and timely explanation in the presence of a common friend, *that* may be healed in an hour, which, if permitted to proceed, a series of years cannot eradicate. Be affectionately free with one another. Give tender and faithful hints where it appears to you that one of your brethren is in danger of being drawn aside from the principles or spirit of the gospel. Let all be given, from their first entering into connexion with you, to expect them. If any one take offence at such treatment, give him to understand that he who cannot endure a caution or a reproof, is unfit for Christian society; and is in the utmost danger of falling into mischief.

The free circulation of the blood, and the proper discharge of all the animal functions, are not more necessary to the health of the body, than good discipline is to the prosperity of a community.

If it were duly considered how much the general interests of religion, and even the salvation of men, may be affected by the purity and harmony of Christian churches, we should tremble at the idea of their being interrupted by us. The planting of a church in a neighbourhood where the gospel is preached, and the ordinances of Christ administered in their purity, is a great blessing. It is a temple reared for God, in which he designs to record his name, to meet with his humble worshippers, and to bless them. We have seen churches of this description, in the midst of a career of spiritual prosperity, edifying one another in love, and gathering souls to the Redeemer's standard, all in a little time, blasted and ruined by some unhappy event that has thrown them into disorder. One of the members, it may be, has acted unworthily—he is reproved—his relations or particular acquaintances take on his side—discipline is interrupted—the church is divided into parties—hard things are said on both sides—the bond of love is broken—tender minds are grieved, and retire—worship is but thinly attended, and the enjoyment of it is vanished—God's friends mourn in secret, and his enemies triumph, saying, aha! so would we have it! Truly it is a serious thing to occasion the ruin of a Church of Christ! *If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy!*

A. FULLER.

Humility makes a man peaceable among brethren, fruitful in well-doing, cheerful in suffering, and constant in holy walking. Humility fits us for the highest services we owe to Christ, and yet will not neglect the lowest service to the meanest saint. Humility can feed upon the meanest dish, and yet it is maintained by the choicest delicacies, as God, Christ, and glory. Humility will make a man bless him that curses him, and pray for those that persecute him. A humble heart is a habitation for God, a scholar for Christ, a companion of angels, a preserver of grace, and meet for glory. Humility is the nurse of our graces, preserver of our mercies, and the great promoter of holy duties.

14. BROOKS.

No. 15

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

CHRISTIAN FIDELITY

TO FRIENDS.

The spirit of Christianity is a spirit of diffusive benevolence. All who are in any measure acquainted with it, will readily acknowledge, that it must inspire a peculiar tenderness of affection to those with whom we are connected, and make us feel a peculiar interest in whatever affects their happiness. But while the belief of the Gospel inspires such a spirit, it will also regulate the manner in which it will be exercised. While a worldly man is chiefly concerned about the temporal prosperity of those who are dear to him, and is chiefly anxious to avert temporal calamity, these things will hold but a secondary place among the sources of friendly solicitude in the heart of a disciple of Jesus. He has learned from experience, that there is a peace which the world knoweth not, and that every man who is a stranger to that peace, whatever his outward circumstances may be, is a stranger to that which is essential to his happiness. He believes the testimony of the word of God, when it declares, that as all men are by nature children of disobedience, they are also children of wrath; that there is only one way of deliverance from this deplorable situation, by believing in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. He recollects, that this is the accepted time, that this is the day of salvation; that our state while here, must fix our state for ever; that the time is short; that if men will not now be convinced of their danger, and embrace the proclamation of mercy, the possibility of escaping that danger shall soon be gone for ever; the things that belong to their peace shall be for ever hid from their eyes.

To a man, then, who believes these declarations, is it possible to conceive any thing more tenderly interesting, than to behold those with whom he may be intimately connected, living in the neglect of that which is essentially necessary to their everlasting peace? But is this a rare case? Where is the Christian to be found, who, while he looks round the circle of his near relations, not to mention the more numerous class of his friends and acquaintances, will not find some at least too obviously living without God and without hope in the world? Among these, also, are often to be found persons of such amiable dispositions, and possessing in many respects such useful and valuable characters, that it is impossible to think of them without feeling a glow of the most unfeigned affection, mingled with the deepest regret.

But ought our feelings to rest here? Is there no active duty which they dictate? nay which, if our attachment to our friends be associated with a suitable impression of the importance of futurity, they should compel us to perform. Alas! it is much to be feared, that this is a department of duty, where many who are the real disciples of Jesus Christ are shamefully negligent. Our obligation faithfully and affectionately to warn those of our friends who seem to be strangers to vital religion, is what we fear many Christians do not even attempt to discharge. Happy should we be, if, upon a closer examination, it appeared that this charge was in a great measure unfounded. Before, however, any can plead innocent, let them look round the circle of their relations, and seriously bring home this question, Are there none of these who seem ignorant of the Gospel, over whom, from my connection with them, I might perhaps have some influence, with whom I must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, but whom I have not with all possible seriousness and affection warned of their danger? Happy indeed is that man, who can satisfy his own conscience, in the answer he returns to such an inquiry. But there is reason to fear, that this is a rare character. The duty we would here inculcate is, we acknowledge, far from being an easy one. There is a certain foolish shyness, which most people are apt to feel, in speaking pointedly even to their nearest and most intimate friends, not about religion in general, but about the ground

of their hopes in the sight of God. This in most cases is so powerful, that nothing but a strong impression of bounden duty will determine a man fairly to attempt it.

But the difficulties we have to encounter, consist not merely in that false delicacy, which, if here indulged, would prevent us altogether from making the attempt; even when this is overcome, we shall find it a duty which it will require much prudence and assiduity faithfully to discharge. Much attention is necessary to watch a favourable opportunity for introducing the subject; and even when it occurs, and we attempt to improve it, we may expect to meet with numberless disappointments. It will often happen, that after a conversation gets into the most favourable train, some unhappy interruption, some unfortunate allusion, may in a moment give it so totally different a direction, that an attempt to restore it to seriousness, and particularly to bring serious considerations a little more closely home, would be equally fruitless and inexpedient. Such is the violent aversion of the human mind to engage in a close inquiry upon this point, that it will have recourse to a thousand doublings and windings to get quit of it. Besides, to mingle that fidelity which a deep impression of the importance of eternity should inspire, with that tenderness of affection which is the very soul of such a duty, will be found an attempt of no inconsiderable difficulty. But while we would not disguise these difficulties, we would remind every sincere disciple of Jesus Christ, that if he consult his Master's honour, his own comfort, or the everlasting interests of his friends, they must be overcome. Each of these considerations powerfully demands it.

Consider how intimately it is connected with our Master's honour. How is it that this is promoted? It is by those who profess attachment to his name, walking consistently with such a profession, and by others becoming the subjects of his victorious grace. But do we act consistently with our profession, if this duty be neglected? What is it we profess to believe? That all men are by nature, in consequence of sin, exposed to the displeasure of the living God; that there is no name given under heaven by which we can be saved, but that of Jesus; that it is only such as, under a sense of their guilt, have fled to

this hope set before them, that shall at last see the face of God with pleasure. Now, where are our pretensions to consistency, if we profess to believe these truths, and at the same time, allow those with whom we are connected to live in a state of alienation from God, and rejection of the Gospel of his Son, without faithfully warning them of their dreadful danger? Every thinking man must be here forced to draw one of two conclusions, either that we do not believe these doctrines at all, or that Christianity is not calculated to inspire that spirit of benevolence which its votaries attribute to it. But think farther, how the glory of Jesus might be promoted, were such admonitions accompanied with success. We have reason to hope, that in some cases at least, through the divine blessing, they would be so. In every such instance, a fresh revenue of praise would redound to the blessed Immanuel. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Every individual of this description exhibits a fresh display to all the host of heaven, of that mighty power whereby Jesus worketh in the hearts of those that believe.

Again, think how much the discharge of this duty must be connected with our own comfort. It has been already remarked, that whenever a man has felt the importance of salvation to his own soul, there is nothing so deeply affecting as the salvation of the souls of his friends, by whom this precious salvation is disregarded. But what solid comfort can he enjoy, who, while he is convinced of their danger, neglects to warn them of it till their feet stumble on the dark mountains, and the possibility of escaping be lost for ever. Let us suppose, that even these admonitions should prove unsuccessful: Though this must be a painful thought, it is not destitute of its consolations; it is satisfactory to think we have attempted at least to discharge an important duty, and that it is not from any negligence of ours that such a one has gone forward in those paths that lead to ruin. If, on the other hand, such an attempt should be accompanied with success, is it possible to conceive so high a source of enjoyment on this side of the grave, as that of being the happy instrument of leading one in many respects, perhaps, justly dear to us, to an acquaintance with that grace which shall make him happy for ever.

But does not a regard for the interests of our friends

powerfully enforce the same duty? If you thought their lives were in danger, you would be eager to warn them of it; or if they ran a risk of being deprived of their property, you would be happy to point out to them the way in which it might be secured; and is the loss of their souls an object of such inferior concern, that you can quietly see them living in a manner which, on your principles, must expose them to irretrievable ruin, without ever faithfully and affectionately pointing out to them such a danger? Tell it not in Gath. Let it no longer be the triumph of the adversary, that Christians, amidst all their professions, are so apt practically to overlook the amiable spirit of our holy religion. Let every Christian who is conscious of deficiency here, blush at his past negligence, and rest not contented, till he have embraced some opportunity of faithfully warning such of his friends as seem strangers to divine grace, of the absolute necessity of a change, before they can enjoy the kingdom of God.

The degree in which we have reason to lament the too general neglect of this duty, is proportioned to the good effects which in all probability would in many cases result from it, were it more faithfully performed. It is altogether impossible to calculate the extent of these. It is surely a most lamentable consideration, that there are probably many who live and die in a Christian land, without having ever once received a just representation of their character, or having been even once faithfully warned of their danger. We do not here plead for such, any apology, if they continue to reject the Gospel. They must be guilty of a negligence that is highly culpable. But their condition is deeply deplorable. Such men are not accustomed to read the word of God. When they occasionally go to the house of God, they generally attend those places of worship where their pride is flattered, where the evil of sin and its tremendous consequences are never faithfully announced, where false consolations are administered, till the unhappy deluded sinner goes down to the grave with a lie in his right hand. Surely no attempt should be omitted, by which it is possible in any measure to counteract so dreadful an evil. Eternity is not a subject for compliment. It is too important to be kept out of view by the forms of etiquette.

Now, is it not plain, that were the duty we are here re

commending more frequently discharged, it would contribute in a good measure to prevent this evil? There are not perhaps a great many persons who will not find, either among their more immediate relations or their acquaintances, some possessed of vital godliness. If all such, then, were with one consent to unite in the discharge of this duty, there would be found comparatively few who had not received, from some one or other, a faithful and affectionate admonition to examine seriously the ground of their hope in the sight of God. Where so many warnings were given, would there not be every probability of some of them at least proving successful? and would not those who derived spiritual benefit from such admonitions be anxious, from their experience of the advantages of such a conduct, to extend similar advantages to others? Those who had been brought to serious inquiry in this particular way, would naturally be peculiarly partial to it; and a very visible effect might thus soon be produced on the general aspect of the Christian world.

Does it then appear, from the spirit of the Gospel, a duty incumbent on every Christian to embrace some opportunity of faithfully warning such of his friends as seem strangers to divine grace, of the danger to which they are exposed, if they live and die in such a state? Then let every Christian who is forced to acknowledge this, without delay endeavour to perform it. If solid comfort is incompatible with the admission of known duty, before such comfort can be enjoyed, this duty must be attempted. A real Christian is one who holds himself in readiness to attempt at least the discharge of every duty which the Gospel requires. Perhaps this is a duty which you have in a great measure hitherto neglected, from its importance having never before so particularly occurred to you. This has already been eminently the case with regard to another duty, that of endeavouring to send the knowledge of the Gospel to the Heathen. The Christian world in general had long overlooked it. But it was only necessary that it should be pointed out. It carried its importance, and the evidence of its obligation, in its own bosom, and the simple suggestion of it has introduced a new æra in the Christian church. We hope our obligations to the duty we have been here recommending, are supported by a similar sort

of evidence. The whole spirit of Christianity, viewed in connection with its doctrines, plainly requires it.

It must, I think, be allowed by all, that this is not at least an indifferent point. It is either duty or not; and every reader who wishes to follow the path of duty, wherever it may lead him, is earnestly requested to come to a decision upon this subject. He must either conclude, that it is not fairly inferred from the doctrines and spirit of the Gospel; or if it be, let him proceed without delay to the discharge of it. Here we would beg leave to suggest a specific rule, which is always more useful than merely general recommendations. It might be useful to make out a list of those friends to whom we are conscious we owe such a duty, and to be habitually upon the watch to embrace some favourable opportunity for discharging it. It might also be beneficial to have certain periods set apart for reviewing the progress we have made in this labour of love. If this rule be rejected, let some other be adopted. We would only remark, that those who know something of the deceitfulness of the human heart, and how apt we are, from a spirit of procrastination, to rest in general acknowledgments of duty, without going farther, will feel the importance, nay, the absolute necessity, of some such specific mode of enforcing it.

If any thing farther were necessary to induce every Christian reader to attend to our important obligations on this subject without delay, we would intreat him to consider in what light it will appear, when our friends are removed from us into the world of spirits. When one of those with whom we were perhaps intimately connected in life, is carried into the eternal world, what is the interesting question, which, in point of importance, obliterates every other consideration? It is this: What has become of this person's soul? If there be at this trying hour any reason to fear that all is not well with the immortal spirit. Oh! how cutting the reflection, if we have, from any false delicacy, failed to warn him when the possibility of a change is gone for ever!

Let the believing view, then, and the frequent contemplation of this interesting period, impress the importance of this duty upon our consciences. Let it lead us to surmount every difficulty, and with unshaken perseverance to

discharge it. The possibility of being partaker of the exalted enjoyment of promoting the salvation of even one soul, should annihilate every difficulty in our esteem, and give fresh energy day by day to every exertion by which, through the divine blessing, such an object may be attained.

THE DIVINE GOODNESS.

The Divine Being who is the object of our adoration, and whom we, as Christians, delight to worship, is a good and gracious God; he is essentially good: in this sense there is none good but one, that is God. We might dwell on the contemplation of his goodness, as it is shown in providence; and then a large field would open to our view: in this sense "the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works." Ten thousand times ten thousand instances of his goodness are daily seen in his dealings with his creatures. But let it be observed, that his goodness is most gloriously manifested through Christ. Good will towards men was proclaimed at the Saviour's birth. Luke ii. 14. O what astonishing goodness it was in the Father to give his only begotten Son to sorrows, agonies, and death, for us. This was no other than his goodness, under the appellation of love: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

Herein the love or goodness of God was commended. Rom. viii. 8. It was infinite and unbounded goodness, imparted through Christ alone, as the Mediator between an offended God and offending sinners. Does not this goodness shine most conspicuously in pardoning all our crimes? "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions." Is it not displayed in raising us from a death in in sin to a life of righteousness; in accepting us as righteous, through the obedience of Christ; in answering our poor, imperfect prayers; in directing and guiding us with his counsel; supplying our temporal and spiritual wants; and in keeping us by his power, through faith, unto eternal salvation? FAWCETT.

15.

N^o. 16

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

NECESSITY OF PRAYER

FOR DIVINE INFLUENCE.

BY WILLIAM WARD, MISSIONARY TO INDIA.

In visiting my native country, (England) after a long absence, perhaps I have felt more powerful impressions while attending the meetings of Bible and Missionary Societies, than others could be expected to do. In some instances, my joy has been almost overpowering. Yet these pleasures have sometimes been subject to a considerable drawback; and I have then said to myself, 'True, in the hands of man every good receives a deterioration; and every effort that he makes, however pure and legitimate, is marked with the impression of human infirmity.'

The object of the Bible Society is most divine, and the union it has cemented among all deserving the Christian name, after the controversies, persecutions, and butcheries of centuries, is one of the sublimest spectacles exhibited since the primitive age. Yet, though perhaps more pure than almost any other human institution, even here, at the meetings devoted to the interests of this society, and at those of its auxiliaries, the imperfections of the human agents have been sometimes visible. It need not then excite surprise, whatever regret it may excite, if in other institutions there should have been found the spirit of party, of the corporation:—and if, instead of the song "Unto him that loved us," we have sometimes heard a song to the praise and glory of man.

But this is not all: with the praise of man, there has been much foolish and destructive confidence in man. We hear incessant references made, with a degree of pride, to

institutions without end for removing human ignorance and human misery, and for bringing in the Millennium; but oh! how little reference to that agency without which all these mighty operations are doomed to terminate in the mere exhibition of human imbecility, and the derision of the powers of darkness. How many thousands of Bibles and Testaments (the Bible Society has issued at least three millions) more than formerly, are now perused by mankind; and on the Christian Sabbath, how many agents are at work, how many minds receiving culture, and yet *how few saving results!* We are content to labour, and to publish an annual report, and there the matter ends.

So in missionary engagements: we send forth labourers, and the supposed obligation of making the very most of the success granted, prevents those who preside over these efforts from summoning every man to his closet, and pointing every man to the only means of success—prayer for divine influence. We have embarked in this cause too much in the spirit of the man at St. Helena, rather than as those who expect every thing through the medium of faith and prayer, and who have ever present with them the words of the Lord of the harvest, "Without me ye can do nothing."

It is true, there is a universal admission of the fact, that without the influences of the Holy Spirit, not a single conversion can be wrought, and that these influences are promised to prayer; yet it is most grievous to witness how little practical attention is paid to this doctrine, how little of deep solicitude is manifested in regard to this all-necessary blessing.

For instance, one would expect, that this would take place of every other subject in missionary reports and addresses; and that missionary sermons would be full of it. But what is the real fact?—Should there, however, be little notice taken of prayer, as the means of success in these publications, surely at missionary prayer-meetings, the minister who addresses the congregation, and those who lead the devotions, will think of nothing else; that the whole service will tend to excite a spirit of prayer, or that the whole time will be spent in earnest supplications, or in waiting, for this all-necessary blessing. Nothing can be more inauspicious; you would be certain that these persons

had embraced the opinion, that the most probable means of obtaining the blessing was to manifest the most perfect indifference respecting it. Is not this conduct more inconsistent than that of the person, who, after sowing his rice, should forget to open the sluices which are to convey to it the stream without which it must inevitably perish?

The same painful appearances present themselves, at the annual missionary meetings in London. One would expect, that all the churches of Christ throughout the United Kingdom, would be invited on these great days to join the churches and delegates in London, in solemn acts of fasting and prayer. What an impressive and most interesting spectacle would this be, to see all England, Scotland, and Ireland, on their knees, supplicating the Father of Mercies in behalf of One Hundred Millions of heathen subjects; or rather, in behalf of a sinful and lost world! How it would commend itself to every serious mind! And might we not hope, that their united cries would come up with acceptance before Him with whom is the residue of the Spirit? But, instead of fasting and prayer at these great seasons, we keep a religious jubilee, although 600,000,000 of the beings to whom it refers, die every thirty years "without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world!" We meet with the feelings of conquerors, when, in fact, the whole country remains in the hands of the enemy.

The anxiety felt by missionaries on the subject, it is probable, is increased by their residence among the idolaters; by beholding whole countries perishing; so that the missionary is like a person walking through a populous town in India, in the extremity of a famine, when the streets are filled with crowds of the famished and dying inhabitants: by having had to grapple with the tremendous difficulties in the way of conversion among the heathen, in addition to those which exist in what is called a Christian country. Britain contains many thousands of faithful ministers. Even Wales, which has not so great a population as the town of Calcutta, in Bengal, has a thousand. These ministers are surrounded with large attentive congregations, and conversions are now and then produced. Here then the want of divine influence is less manifest. But in Hindoost'han, millions are to be taught. The labourers are

lost among this dense population like a drop in the ocean. The prejudices of the natives; their superstition, ignorance of all scripture-truths, their levity, their multiplied errors; their slavish subjection to the priests; the difficulties of the languages; and the terrific deprivations following a profession of Christianity:—these and many other difficulties, added to the natural enmity, hardness, and unbelief of the heart, all lead the mind of the missionary to feel the need of divine help. His spirit is bowed down within him, when he sees himself surrounded only with idol temples, idolatrous priests, rites, and cruelties, and when those for whom his very heart bleeds, treat his most serious addresses with contempt or ridicule. How often is he ready to ask, "Can these dry bones live? O Lord God, thou only knowest." If the friends of missions could realize the scenes with which the missionary is surrounded, they would be better able to participate in the deep anxiety felt by him, relative to those influences which make the gospel "the POWER of God."

This neglect of prayer, must also be considered as grieving the Holy Spirit. If the work of conversion, bringing men out of darkness into light, and from the power of Satan unto God, be his own work, in vain we attempt to convince, to illuminate, and to renovate without him. And if his influences are bestowed in answer to prayer, ("How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit *to them that ask him;*") then it is the highest arrogance, not to say profaneness, to go into this work without the true spirit of believing dependence, a disposition to give to him the honour of a work so peculiarly his own. And if we ever enjoy, to any great extent, the saving visitations of this Almighty Agent, they will be given only in answer to prayer. The conversions of the day of Pentecost were given to the first missionaries as men assembled together in one place, and waiting for them. Those extensive and deep impressions of religion, which have been felt at different times, and at various places, have generally been preceded by the use of prayer and supplication. Whitefield, Brainerd, and others, it is well known, were men eminent for prayer, and for their dependence upon Divine aid.

It is a most encouraging consideration, that we have in

these influences all we can wish for, whether to meet the most unpromising individual case, or to subdue the alienation of a world. No persons could be apparently further from the kingdom of God than the hearers of the apostle Peter. Some of them had scarcely washed from their hands the blood of the Son of God. And yet Three Thousand persons, forming also the most heterogeneous concourse that were ever collected together, were converted under one simple discourse. Some persons have supposed that the success attending the preaching of the apostles was the effect of miracles. But if miracles could have converted men, then our Lord's ministry must have been exceedingly successful. Yet his miracles did little except increase the number and malice of his enemies.—No, the world was converted by that influence which we now so greatly need; and these influences form the only breeze which can bring the vessel of mercy, freighted with all the human family, into port. In three hours, it is probable, these 3000 men were converted. Supposing the recommencement of such a process, and that it was to proceed till the world was converted, how many hours would be required, at the same ratio, to accomplish this stupendous prodigy—this new creation?

There is, further, a certainty of success when these influences are bestowed, for the agent is God. He searcheth, and he can change the heart. They can be accommodated to the moral circumstances and powers of the subject; and they enter the soul, so that there is nothing hid from their penetrating energy.—Witness Pentecost. Look at the work by Brainerd: he preaches by means of an unconverted interpreter:—to convey spiritual ideas by such a medium must be most difficult. Consider the state of his hearers: stupid, vicious Indians, destitute of every Christian idea, and strangers to every serious thought. And yet see, they weep; they sob; they become deeply and permanently affected, though there has been no appeal to their passions. The change wrought upon them is recognised by all; and they confirm its reality by a happy death. The effects wrought through the ministry of Whitefield were not less powerful, nor less salutary, nor less permanent. To this very hour individuals are found ascribing the change wrought on them to his preaching, who have stood

the test of nearly fifty years, and thousands have passed the flood. It is said that Whitefield never preached without conversion being produced. The serious impressions made on the minds of many at present, in the state of Connecticut, in the United States, may well excite the wonder and gratitude of the churches in America. When in New York the other day, I heard that in the city of Hartford and its immediate vicinity not less than a thousand persons, at the same hour,* were in a state of deep solicitude on that subject, which, more than any other, may well be expected to absorb, for a time at least, all the powers of the human mind.

To urge us to greater diligence in seeking the divine assistance, we should consider, that the whole progress of the dispensation of mercy through the world is inseparably connected with prayer.—1. How long had the pious Jews to pray and wait for the consolation of Israel! Christ was not obtained, then, without the prayers of the church. 2. If there ever was a being on earth to whom prayer was unnecessary, it must have been the Lord Jesus Christ; and yet he spent whole nights in prayer to his heavenly Father; nor could he finish salvation till he had prayed in an agony three times. 3. Further, the reason given why he can save unto the uttermost is, because he ever liveth to make intercession. 4. It would appear from the 8th verse of the second Psalm, that the possession of the heathen, also, by the Saviour, is suspended upon his petitions: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance," &c. 5. The blessings of Pentecost, it appears, were given while the apostles were, with one accord in one place, waiting to be endowed with power from on high. 6. Our Lord Jesus Christ, too, directs us to pray for the Spirit, and to pray to the Lord of the harvest. And the apostle Paul entreats, that the church would pray for him and his missionary brethren, "that the word of the Lord might have free course and be glorified."

In prayer for the Holy Spirit, the Christian brings to

* The Rev. Dr. Spring, of New York, and other most respectable ministers, assured me, when in America, that these revivals would bear the strictest scrutiny.

his aid an Almighty Agent; an enlightening, quickening, and transforming Spirit. It is weakness laying hold of infinite strength: "Prayer," says an eloquent writer, "prayer moves the hand that moves the world." "He who has the *ear*," says another, "has the *hand* of God." The Divine Being condescends to connect the prayers of his saints with the accomplishment of his purposes. And thus also in the bestowment of mercy, he is seated on the throne of grace, to receive the petitions of the penitent. When the Christian is found in this attitude, we see Elijah, in his conflicts with the idolaters of his time, bringing the fire from heaven. It is the prophet Elisha, bringing down the rain, after a drought of three years and six months. It is going to the Fountain of Mercy, to intercede for perishing millions; and moving the divine faithfulness to fulfil the exceedingly great and precious promises, pregnant with the blessings of salvation. It is engaging an influence which brings the criminal condemned to death into a state of pardon and favour, through the Redeemer; which restores to the image of God, and to a capacity of enjoying him for ever, a wretch who was deformed by every hateful disposition towards God and man, and which unites him to a phalanx of holy men, who are co-workers with God in the renovation of a world. Finally, it is opening a direct communication between heaven and earth: herein God himself descends and dwells with men. And thus the kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom conquered by the power as well as the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, it becomes us to take into the account the incalculable good which will follow the bestowment of this blessing; a good rolling on in a mighty torrent, age after age, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord. Let the influences of the Holy Spirit be poured out, and then all obstacles give way, whether these obstacles are connected with the state of the heathen, or the weakness of the instruments; and men will be made willing to renounce all for Christ, for this will be the day of divine power. The converted natives themselves will be prepared by these influences to become the most efficient agents in the work of conversion. Missionary funds, too, in consequence of this success, will flow into the missionary treasury. And

the spirit of prayer itself will be increased, from these encouragements given in answer to our petitions. And thus the life and salvation of millions will be given to BELIEVING PRAYER, while success has been, and will for ever be, denied to our most splendid efforts without it.

DEATH OF A HINDOO.

When a Hindoo comes to die, his friends will endavour to console him by repeating his good deeds:—that he has always been a good man; has worshipped the gods; regularly performed his ablutions; been liberal to the priests; has done nobody any harm; and that therefore he can have nothing to fear. The dying man breaks out in some such language as this: 'I! What good have I been doing? I have done nothing but evil. And now, where am I going?—Into what new body am I about to transmigrate?—Or, into what dreadful hell am I about to be plunged?' There is among them an earnest clinging to ceremonies, but no hope in death.

Permit me to plead with my fellow-christians, that I may, if possible, excite them to feel for all these perishing Hindoos.

And are these the living and dying circumstances of one hundred millions of beings who are to live for ever? How can we, with the views we have of the certain consequences following a state of transgression, and of the worth of the human soul; how can we enjoy a moment's tranquillity while such a havoc made by sin and death is going forward, hour by hour, in the same world as that in which we live? How can we be such infidels in reference to the threatenings against sin, or such tigers in reference to the millions who are perishing? Or has Jesus Christ given us such a class of feelings, that we have ceased to be men? Is the world to be converted by miracle or by means? If by means,—by "preaching the gospel to every creature," and by "teaching all nations,"—then how heavy the responsibility lying upon the Christian church!

WARD'S LETTERS.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's General Depository, Philad. and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

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N° 17

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

INCONSISTENCIES

IN THE CONDUCT OF CHRISTIANS.

A CHRISTIAN is a man endued with the spirit of Christ, and who imitates the example of Christ. His heart is under the influence of Divine grace, and his actions bear the marks of a renewed nature. He is under every possible obligation to adorn the gospel of God, by the holiness of his life and the purity of his conversation. But, it has often happened, that the inconsistencies of professors have sunk religion into the dust, and caused the sneer of the infidel, and the laugh of the profane, who are always waiting to exclaim, "Aha, so would we have it."

In proportion to the elevated rank of an inconsistent professor, so will be the mischief he creates. A private Christian whose conduct gives "the lie to his creed," does an incalculable injury to the cause of religion; but a minister, who preaches the truth, and does not live the truth, is a sort of moral volcano, standing in the midst of his hearers, belching forth torrents of noisome and pestilential lava, which obstruct many in their way to the cross, and retard many in their advancement in the ways of salvation. The evils he thus effects, will probably never be counterbalanced by his future usefulness. It was formerly said, in reference to a certain preacher, "when he is *in* the pulpit, he should never be allowed to come out, because he instructs so *well*; and when he is *out*, he should never be permitted to re-enter, because he lives so *badly*:"—*a part of this* may be applied to some ministers of the present day. Without entering into a minute or systematic exposure of the subject in hand, I merely give a few hints and general remarks:—

An unnecessary association with carnal company, is not the least inconsistency of professing Christians. We are sometimes forced to be with the ungodly, yet we ought not to be happy with them; but there are professors, and men

bearing the name and office of ministers, who *choose* such for their companions: this induces a want of spirituality, and is inseparably connected with a habit of frivolity and love of the world; it creates a want of decisive proof of character, and produces a base temporizing and a vacillating spirit, to accommodate the church of God, and the principles and maxims of the world. It is a duty to be civil and obliging to all, but not to be familiar and friendly with all. If ministers and professors were to reprove the vices of their sinful associates, to warn them of their danger, and to introduce religious and spiritual conversation, their company would not be often courted. But it has often happened, that ministers and professors so forget the dignity of their character, and the holiness of their calling, as to disregard the injunctions of the Bible in reference to this point, and thus they give a tacit countenance to all the profanity of their wicked friends. St. Bernard has well said in reference to this subject, "Not a word of the scriptures; nothing of salvation; but, trifles, toys, and laughter, and words as light as the wind, eat up the time." Christians should imitate the conduct of the disciples in the journey to Emmaus; and conversation respecting a crucified Redeemer would cause our hearts to burn with holy love, and would produce greater enjoyments of religion, and more intimate communion with God.

Covetousness is an inconsistency not altogether unknown. Many a Christian who would shudder at the commission of open profanity, is quite contented to have his heart deaf to the calls of humanity, and hardened by the cursed influence of avarice. His prayers are always ready, but his purse is ever closed. He is a stranger to the "luxury of doing good." What can the world think of a Christian who is covetous as Demas? And what does the Bible declare respecting him? It excludes him from heaven, and ranks him with the vilest idolater. Covetousness is like the grave, which never says, "It is enough;" it is like Solomon's leech, always crying "Give, give." Many feel more anxiety at the loss of a few pounds, than at the loss of the favour of their God. The more a covetous man has, the more he wants. Solomon wisely compares riches to "*things which are not*,"—they are only a shadow; religion is a substance.

Violence of Temper, is another evil, chargeable on pro-

fessors. Does this correspond with the meekness of the Christian character? Does it agree with the conduct of Christ? They do not hear the scoffing world exclaim, "where is your gentleness!" Violent tempers produce violent actions. A headstrong disposition and an unrestrained spirit have been the curse and bane of many a Christian society. A man endued with such a temper is the last person who ought to govern others, because he cannot govern himself. In his family, he is a domestic tyrant; in the world, he is a turbulent oppressor; and in the church, he is an ecclesiastical despot, "lording it over God's heritage." But, if religion does nothing for the temper, it does very little for the soul.

Detraction is also found amongst Christians. Those who are not guilty of evil-speaking and backbiting, often do more injury by base insinuations, than they would by specific accusations and open charges. Connected with this, is a spirit of envy, which will pass by a thousand moral beauties, to expose a single blot. "Cursed is he that smiteth his neighbour secretly."—Detraction is generally accompanied with dissimulation, and I know not what can be more awful, than the habit, not only of speaking lies, but of manufacturing them: "Oh, my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united." These evils often proceed from idleness: if these persons were more active in the world and in the church, they would find no time for detraction.

Want of Love, is a gross inconsistency.—Some professors will rend a Christian Community, and destroy every particle of affection, rather than abandon a preconceived opinion, or relinquish a favourite maxim. "These things ought not so to be." We are brethren, and should act as brethren. Our great Examplar not only preached love in His sermons, and petitioned for it in His prayers, but practised it in His life; and I would say to every Christian, "Go, and do thou likewise."

There are many other inconsistencies, which I merely mention, such as light thoughts of the sanctity of the Sabbath day, absence of family discipline, bad example to servants, neglect of instruction to children and domestics, an undue severity and moroseness of temper, ingratitude for mercies, murmurings under adverse circumstances, pride

and conformity to the world, and want of family prayer:—these are not *imaginary* evils—would to God they were! They are too true, and too frequent.

By these inconsistencies the Holy Spirit is grieved, and a disgrace is entailed on our holy religion. We should never forget that the world is, in a certain sense, omniscient in reference to our faults. We are "lights on a hill," and we ought not only to be concerned to shine with steadiness, but with brilliancy. We should not only live above sin, but above the suspicion of it; not only flee from evil, but avoid the very appearance of it. The glory of God, and the advancement of vital godliness, are inseparably connected with the consistency of our conduct. The taunt has often been heard, "What do ye more than others?" More is expected and more is required. We naturally expect more splendour from the shining of the sun, than from the burning of a candle, and more water from the bursting of a cloud, than from the emptying of a cistern; so, more holiness and piety are expected from the Christian than from the man of the world, and if he *does* no more than others, it is a presumptive proof that *he is* no more than others.

These inconsistencies produce fearful evils in reference to the young inquirer. He sees those who ought to be his spiritual guides showing him the worst examples, and he beholds those whose lives ought to be practical comments on the Bible, trampling its holy precepts under their feet. The eagerness of the young convert is not only checked, and the faith of the genuine believer damped, but religion itself is made the scoff of the profane. A sanctimonious appearance, and a canting conversation, will not counterbalance errors in practice: It is not what a man *professes*, but how he *lives*, that must decide the reality of his religion. Good works are *the only evidence* we can offer the world. Carnal men always decide upon the goodness of religion by the conduct of its professors, instead of judging from the principles of the system itself, although they do not reason in the same manner in reference to other concerns. A holy life is the best and most convincing argument for Christianity, and I know not what right those have to imagine that they are Christians, who cannot give this evidence; when our Saviour himself has erected the immutable and universal standard, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

N° 18

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

MENNO'S DEPARTURE FROM POPERY.

A TRANSLATION BY IRA CHASE.

First published in the Columbian Star, May, 1825.

INTRODUCTORY LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE EDITOR.

The following account of Menno's departure from Popery, has produced on my mind a deep impression. It is found among his collected works in the Dutch language, and forms a small part of the piece entitled, Een Klare Beantwoordinghe over eene Schrift Gellii Fabri,—A clear Reply to a publication of Gellius Faber. It seems to have been translated, at an early period, into the German; and in this shape it is inserted by professor Wadzeck in his lucid work on the Mennonites, recently published in Prussia. He speaks of it in terms of high commendation, as a *small, rare tract, bearing evident marks of genuineness and truth.* But with the original before me, I have needed no testimonial in its favour. In reading it I have been carried back three hundred years, to a most eventful period, and placed in the company of a man of apostolical spirit. Menno was born in Friesland, in the year 1505. Mosheim, it will be recollected, observes: "After a life of toil, peril, and agitation, he departed in peace in the year 1561, in the Dutchy of Holstein, at the country seat of a certain nobleman, not far from the city of Oldesloe, who, moved with compassion at a view of the perils to which Menno was exposed, and the snares that were daily laid for his ruin, took him, together with several associates, into his protection, and gave him an asylum."

His death occurred seven years after he wrote the Reply, containing the account which is now presented to the English reader.

The sketch, brief as it is, must excite many a sober reflection, many a grateful emotion. It is the voice of one 'of whom the world was not worthy;' of one whose dust has for ages slept in its lowly bed, but who yet speaks to the hearts of men. In this land of religious freedom, it cannot be useless to listen, now and then, to 'the sighing of the prisoners' that is heard from other nations, and other times.

Heaven grant that what is here presented may tend to cherish the spirit of primitive Christianity,—of love and obedience to Christ crucified—and impress the remembrance of the fact, in view of eternity, that 'unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be required.' I submit it, dear Sir, to your disposal; happy in the confidence, that you will join most cordially in the prayer of

THE TRANSLATOR.

May 20, 1825.

ACCOUNT OF MENNO'S DEPARTURE FROM POPERY;

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF, A. D. 1554.

My reader, I write you the truth in Christ, and lie not. In my twenty-fourth year I entered on the office of priest in my father's village called Pingium, where also two others, of about my age, were with me occupied in the same service. The one was my Pastor, the other was under me. These both had read the Scriptures some; but I had not in my whole life meddled with them; for I feared that by reading them I might be led astray. See, so stupid a preacher was I during two years.

The next year, whenever at mass I handled the bread and wine, the thought occurred to me, these are not literally the Lord's flesh and blood. At first, I supposed the thought came from Satan seeking to seduce me from the faith. I confessed it often with sighing, and I prayed; yet I could not be rid of this thought.

The two mentioned young men and I passed our days in sporting, drinking, and the like methods of consuming time, in all vanity, which alas! is the custom with such unfruitful

people. And when we had occasion to treat a little of the Scripture, I could not speak with them a word without scoffing; for I knew not what I meant:—so shut up was God's word from my eyes.

At last, I resolved to examine the New Testament once with diligence. I had gone in it but a little way, when I discovered that we were deceived; and my mind that had been troubled about the bread was, without any one's guidance, soon delivered from its anguish. Yet so far was Luther of service to me, as he had proved that human commands bind no man to eternal death.

Through the Lord's enlightening and grace I advanced daily in the knowledge of the Scriptures, and by some was soon called (though without good reason) an evangelical preacher. Each sought and loved me; for the world loved me, and I the world. However, it was said that I preached God's word, and was a fine man. Afterwards it happened, before I had ever heard of any *brethren*, that a devout, innocent hero, of the name of Siecke Snyder, was beheaded at Leuwarden, because, he had been re-baptized. It sounded very strange in my ears to speak of a person's being re-baptized. I examined the Scriptures with diligence, and meditated on them earnestly; but I could find in them no notice of infant baptism. As I marked this, I spake of it to my Pastor; and after many conversations, he acknowledged that infant baptism had no ground in the Scriptures. Yet I dared not trust so much to my understanding. I consulted some ancient authors, who taught me that children must by baptism be washed from their original sin. This I compared with the Scriptures, and perceived that it set at nought the blood of Christ. Afterwards I went to Luther, and would gladly have known from him the ground; and he taught me that we must baptize children on their own faith, because they are holy. This, also, I saw was not according to God's word. In the third place, I went to Bucer, who taught me that we should baptize children in order to be able the more diligently to take care of them, and bring them up in the ways of the Lord. But this, too, I saw was a groundless representation. In the fourth place, I had recourse to Bullinger, who pointed me to the covenant of circumcision; but I found, as before, that, according to the Scripture, the

practice could not stand. As I now, on every side, observed that the writers stood on grounds so very different, and each followed his own reason, I saw clearly that we were deceived with infant baptism.

Not long afterwards I was called to another village, Witmarsum, in which I was born. I went for the sake of gain, and with the desire of increasing my reputation. I spake there without spirit and love, (as is the manner of all hypocrites) and so made disciples as bad as myself; vain boasters, and frivolous talkers, who had never entered on the business of religion in earnest. And though I understood much of the Holy Scriptures, yet I consumed this knowledge with the delights of my youth in an unholy carnal life, without usefulness; and sought nothing but gain, ease, the favour of men, power, a great name and honour,—as persons such as I was, are generally accustomed to do.

See, my reader, I have, by the gracious favour of God, acquired my knowledge, as well of baptism as of the Lord's supper, through the enlightening of the Holy Spirit attendant on my much reading and contemplating the Scripture, and not through the efforts and means of seducing sects as I am accused. I trust that I write the truth, and seek no vain glory. Some men, it is true, in this matter, were of service to me; and for it I will forever thank the Lord. Meantime, as I had resided there about a year, it happened that some with baptism found their way into the place. But whence they came, and where was their home, and who in particular they were, is to me unknown; and I have not seen them in my whole life.

Afterwards appeared the Munster sect, through which many pious hearts in our region were deceived. My soul was in great trouble, for I perceived that they were zealous, and yet erred in doctrine. I set myself with what little talents I possessed in opposition, and exerted my influence in preaching and exhortation to the utmost of my ability. Twice I had a conversation with one of their leaders, once privately, the other time publicly. But my exhortation helped nothing, while I still myself was doing that which I knew was not right. The report was circulated extensively. It was said I could stop their mouths. Reference or appeal was made to me by all sorts of their

antagonists. I saw that I was the champion of the impenitent, the worldly opposers of reformation, who all had recourse to me. This gave my heart a severe blow; and I sighed and prayed to God: Lord help me, that I may not be chargeable with the sin of others. My soul was troubled; and I thought on the end, namely, though I should gain the whole world and live in it a thousand years, but at last have to bear God's punishing hand and indignation, what would it profit me.

The poor sheep that had gone astray as having no true shepherds, now collected themselves, after having suffered many cruel immolations, butcherings, and murders, into a place called Old Cloister, not far from my residence; and, alas! through the godless doctrine of Munster, against the spirit and word and example of Christ, drew in their own defence the sword which Peter was commanded by the Lord to sheathe. As this occurred, the blood of these men, though they were led into error, fell so heavily on my heart that I could not endure it, nor find rest in my soul. I considered my unholy, carnal life, and my hypocritical doctrine and idolatry, which I yet daily exhibited, though without satisfaction to myself, and even in contradiction to my conscience. I saw with my eyes that these zealous children, (though now acting on a mistaken principle) freely gave up their property and their lives for their belief; and I was one of those who had in part disclosed to some of them the papal enormities. Yet I was continuing in my careless life and acknowledged abominations, only that I might enjoy the ease of my flesh, and avoid the cross of the Lord.

These considerations so stung me to the heart, that they became intolerable. I thought by myself: I—miserable man! what am I doing? while I remain in such a state, and do not act fully according to the knowledge bestowed on me, and resign myself to the word of the Lord; and do not according to my little gift, oppose with the word of the Lord, the impenitent carnal life, and hypocrisy of the learned, as also their perverted baptism, supper, and false worship; and do not, so much as in me is, direct the inoffensive wandering sheep, (that would gladly go right, did they but know the right way)

to the true pasture of Christ. How then will the shed blood of such, though done in error, come forth against thee at the judgment of the great and Almighty God, and pronounce before Him condemnation upon thy ruined, suffering soul.

My heart within my bosom trembled. I besought my God with sighing and tears, that to me a troubled sinner he would grant the gift of his grace; that he would make in me a clean heart; that he would graciously forgive my impure conduct, and loose, vain life, through the merit of the blood of Christ; that he would endue me with wisdom, spirit, frankness, and manly fortitude, so that I might preach his worthy name and holy word unadulterated, and proclaim his truth to his praise.

I began in the name of the Lord to teach publicly from the pulpit, the doctrine of true repentance, to guide the people in the narrow path, to testify concerning sins and unchristian behaviour, and all idolatry and false worship, as also concerning baptism and the supper, according to the sense and fundamental principles of Christ, so far as I, at the time, had received grace from my God. Also I warned every man in regard to the Munster abominations, in regard to a king, to polygamy, to a worldly kingdom, to the sword, &c. most faithfully; until the great and gracious Lord, perhaps after the course of nine months, extended to me his fatherly spirit, help, and mighty hand, so that I freely abandoned at once my character, honour, and fame, which I had among men, as also my anti-christian abominations, mass, infant baptism, loose and careless life and all, and put myself willingly in all trouble and poverty under the pressing cross of Christ my Lord. In my weakness I feared God; I sought pious people, and of these I found some, though few, in good zeal and doctrine. I disputed with the perverted, and some I gained through God's help and power, and led them by his word to the Lord Christ; but the stiff-necked and obdurate I commended to the Lord.

See, my reader; thus has the gracious Lord drawn me, through the free favour of his great grace. He first stirred in my heart; he has given me a new mind; he has humbled me in his fear; he has led me from the way of

death, and, through mere mercy, has called me upon the narrow path of life into the company of the saints. To Him be praise for ever. Amen.

Perhaps a year afterwards, as I was silently employing myself on the word of the Lord, in reading and writing, there came to me six or eight persons, who were of one heart and soul with me; in their faith and life (so far as man can judge) irreproachable; separated from the world, according to the direction of the Scripture; subjected to the cross of Christ; and bearing a hearty abhorrence, not only of the Munster, but also of all worldly sects, anathematizing, and corruptions. With much kind entreaty they urged me, in the name of the pious who were agreed with them and me in one spirit and sentiment, that I would yet lay a little to heart the great, severe distress and necessities of the poor oppressed souls, (for the hunger was great, but very few were the faithful stewards) and employ the talent which, unworthy as I was, I had received from the Lord.

As I heard this, my heart was very much troubled; anguish and fearfulness surrounded me. For, on the one side, I saw my small gift, my want of erudition, my weak and bashful nature, the extremely great wickedness, wilfulness, perverse conduct, and tyranny of the world; the powerful large sects, the craftiness of many spirits, and the heavy cross which, should I begin, would not a little press me. On the other side, I saw the pitiable extreme hunger, want, and necessity of the devout pious children; for I perceived clearly enough that they erred as the simple forsaken sheep when they have no shepherd.

At last, after much prayer, I resigned myself to the Lord and his people, with this condition: They were for a length of time, to unite with me in praying to Him fervently, that, should it be his holy pleasure to employ me in this service to his praise, his fatherly kindness would then give me such a heart and mind, as would testify to me with Paul, *Wo is me, if I preach not the Gospel;* but should his will be otherwise, that he would order such means as to permit the matter to rest where it was. For Christ says: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

See, my reader; thus I am not of the Munster, nor of any other seditious sect, as I am calumniated; but of a people called, though unworthy, to this service; who were willing to follow Christ and his word; who, in the fear of their God, led a penitent life; who served their neighbour in love; who bore the cross patiently; who sought the health and welfare of all men; who loved righteousness and truth; and who abominated unrighteousness and iniquity. This character which they exhibit is a strong and living proof that they are not such perverted schismatics as they are accused of being; but, however unknown to the world, are true Christians, only they believe that the word of Christ is to be trusted, and that his irreproachable holy life and example are infallible and right. A great sinner as I have been, I am enlightened of the Lord, converted to a new mind, fled from Babylon, removed to Jerusalem, and arrived at last to this high and difficult service.

As now the above mentioned persons ceased not from their entreaty, and also my own conscience urged me while I saw the great hunger and need that have been intimated, I gave up myself to the Lord with body and soul, and commended myself to his gracious hand, and began at his time, according to his holy word, to teach and to baptize; with my little ability to labour in his field; to build up his holy city and temple, and to raise again the fallen stones. And, through our feeble service, teaching, and simple writing, with the careful deportment, labour, and help of our faithful brethren, the great and mighty God has made so known and public, in many cities and lands, the word of true repentance, the word of his grace and power, together with the wholesome use of his holy sacraments, and has given such growth to his churches, and endued them with such invincible strength, that not only many proud stout hearts have become humble, the impure chaste, the drunken temperate, the covetous liberal, the cruel kind, the godless godly, but also for the testimony which they bear, they faithfully give up their property to confiscation, and their bodies to torture and to death,—as has occurred again, and again, to the present hour.

These can be no fruits nor marks of false doctrine;

(with that God does not co-operate) nor under such oppression and misery could any thing have stood so long were it not the power and word of the Almighty. Indeed, what is yet more, there is bestowed in these trials so much grace and wisdom (as Christ promised to all his: Luke xxi. 15.) that all the world's learned and celebrated masters, with all the blood-guilty tyrants who, O God, forgive them! boast that they are Christians, must stand vanquished and ashamed, before these unconquerable heroes and pious witnesses of Christ, so that they neither have nor know any other weapon and escape than banishing, seizing, torturing, murdering, and destroying, agreeably to the custom of the old serpent from the beginning,—as yet, in many places in our Netherlands, may daily, alas! be seen and traced.

See, this is our calling, doctrine, and fruit of our service, for which we are so horribly calumniated, and persecuted with so much enmity. Whether all the prophets, apostles, and true servants of God, did not through their service also produce the like fruits, we would gladly let all the pious judge.

But as to my own poor, weak, and imperfect life, I freely acknowledge that I am a ruined, miserable offender, and by nature sinful. I say with David, "My sin is ever before me." My thoughts, words, and works convict me. I mark and see with Paul that "in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." Yet this I can boast in my infirmity: Were the wicked and profligate world to hear with patience our doctrine (which indeed is not ours, but the Lord Christ's) and be willing humbly to follow it in the pure fear of God, it would most certainly be a far more Christian and a far better world than, alas! it now is.

I thank my God who has given me the grace that with Paul, I hate sin, and desire holiness, and wish cordially that, even were it with my blood, I might deliver the whole world from their sinful state, and win them to Christ; that I might fear my God with my whole heart, love, seek, and serve him, do right and well before his eyes, and be a blameless, pious Christian. This in his grace is my whole desire. I hope also through the Lord's compassion and help, that no one can justly accuse me either of covetous-

ness or of extravagance. Gold and riches I have not, and desire not. Some out of perverse hearts say, that I eat more of *roasted* than they of *boiled*, and drink more of wine than they of beer. My Lord and master Jesus Christ had to be treated by the perverse as a wine-bibber and a glutton. I trust through his grace, that in this respect, I am clear and innocent before my God. He who bought me with the blood of his love, and called me to his service, unworthy as I am, searches me, and knows that I seek neither gold and goods, nor luxury, nor ease on earth, but only my Lord's glory, my salvation, and the souls of many immortals. Wherefore I have had, now the eighteenth year, to endure so excessive anxiety, oppression, trouble, sorrow, and persecution, with my poor, feeble wife and little offspring, that I have stood in jeopardy of my life and in many a fear. Yes, while the priests lie on soft beds and cushions, we must hide ourselves commonly in secret corners. While they at all nuptials and christenings, and other times, make themselves merry in public with fifes, drums, and various kinds of music, we must look out for every dog, lest he be one employed to catch us. Instead of being greeted by all as doctors and masters, we must be called anabaptists, clandestine holders-forth, deceivers, and heretics. In short, while for their services they are rewarded, in princely style, with great emoluments and good days, our reward and portion must be fire, sword, and death.

See, my faithful reader, in such trouble, poverty, oppression and danger of death, have I performed my Lord's service undeviatingly to the present hour; and I hope, through his grace, still further to perform it to his praise, so long as I continue in this tabernacle.

What now I and my true coadjutors in this very difficult, hazardous service, have sought, or could have sought, all the well disposed may easily estimate from the work itself and its fruit. I will then humbly intreat the faithful and candid reader once more, for Jesus' sake, to receive in love this my forced acknowledgment of my enlightening, and make of it a suitable application. I have presented it out of great necessity, that the pious reader may know how it has happened, since I am on all sides calumniated and false-

ly accused, as if I were ordained and called to this service by a seditious and misleading sect. Let him that fears God, read and judge.

The following remarks by the Editor of the Columbian Star accompanied the above Tract on its publication in that paper.

The foregoing Tract is the voice of a much calumniated man, who defends his character, while he acknowledges, and deplores his sins; and amidst unrelenting oppression, exhibits piety of uncommon depth and fervour, and a meek charity towards his persecutors, worthy of the primitive martyrs.

The history of his gradual abandonment of the errors of his former creed, exemplifies, in a remarkable manner, the power of the Scriptures to enlighten and guide the honest mind, which searches them with a due dependence on the spirit of truth. The process, in the case of Menno, was gradual. The light grew brighter and stronger, till at length his delusions melted away, like the mist of the morning.

There is the fullest evidence, that his change of views and of practice was sincere. It was the result of a true conversion to God. There was no calculation of consequences. His interests, his feelings, and his habits, must all have inclined him to retain his connexion with the dominant church. There is, therefore, no colour for the injurious assertion of Mosheim, that he held a "clandestine" intercourse with the "Anabaptists," until he found it convenient to "throw off the mask." Menno asserts, that he had no communication whatever with the *Baptists*, until he had been led, by the Spirit of God, to adopt their principles. He remained, it is true, for a considerable time, a preacher in the Catholic church; but his mind was incessantly agitated. His description of his feelings, at that time, is a lively exhibition of the state of a mind, which is hesitating between the opposite suggestions of duty, inclination, interest, timidity, and self-distrust. Menno pursued the right course. He "besought his God, with sighing and tears,

that to him, a troubled sinner, he would grant the gift of his grace." The Lord heard his prayer, and soon after enabled him to put at hazard his character, honour, and fame, and to abandon his anti-christian abominations.

This tract proves, moreover, not only that Menno opposed the extravagant doctrines of those deluded men, who were engaged in the riots at Munster—for this fact his enemies have not ventured to deny—but that he was so far from seeking to acquire power and distinction as the leader of a sect, that he was with difficulty prevailed on by the Baptists, to become their pastor. His piety, zeal, abilities, and eloquence, naturally gave him the pre-eminence; and he became the leader, and in some respects, the reformer, of the Baptists in Holland.

But apart from its uses, as an historical document, this tract is valuable, as an edifying detail of Christian experience. There is a rare degree of unction in his penitent confessions, and his meek defence of his principles and conduct. It breathes the language of a heart which was no stranger to the sorrows and consolations of those holy men of former ages, who through faith and patience inherited the promises.

Menno was a man of whom the world was not worthy. The age in which he lived was, least of all fitted and disposed to do justice to his character. He espoused opinions, which not only provoked the hostility of the Catholic church, but which found little favour among the 'powerful large sects,' the Lutherans and Calvinists.

It is not surprising, therefore, that his conduct has been misunderstood, and misrepresented. We take pleasure in assisting to circulate an authentic exposition of his principles; and we offer our thanks to the translator for the service which he has rendered to us and to our readers, as well as to the interests of truth.

DISAPPOINTMENTS OFTEN BENEFICIAL.

How the Lord seems to have disappointed my calculations! But, perhaps, it is only to show that he can do things much better in his own way; as he often fulfils our best desires in the way we least expected, in order that while he comforts, he may humble us, and teach us to ascribe all the glory to Him. REV. C. WOLFE.

No. 19

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE EARL OF ROCHESTER

Was a great scholar, a great poet, a great sinner, and a great penitent.

His lordship, it appears, had advanced to an uncommon height of wickedness, having been an advocate in the black cause of atheism, and an encomiast to Beelzebub. He had raked too in the very bottom of the jakes of debauchery, and had been a satirist against religion itself. But when, like the prodigal in the gospel, he came to himself, his mind was filled with the most extreme horror, which forced sharp and bitter invectives from him against himself; terming himself the vilest wretch that the sun ever shone upon; wishing he had been a crawling leper in a ditch, a linkboy, or a beggar, or had lived in a dungeon, rather than offended God in the manner he had done.

Upon the first visit of Mr. Parsons to him on May 26th, 1680, after a journey from the west, he found him labouring under great trouble of mind, and his conscience full of terror. The earl told him—"When on his journey, he had been arguing with greater vigour against God and religion, than ever he had done in his life time before, and that he had been resolved to run them down with all the argument and spite in the world; but like the great convert, Paul, he found it hard to kick against God." At this time, however, his heart was so powerfully affected, that he argued as much for God and religion, as ever he had done against them. He had such tremendous apprehensions of the Divine Majesty, mingled with such delightful contemplations of his nature and perfections, and of the amiableness of religion, that he said,—"I never was advanced thus far towards happiness in my life before; though upon the commission of some sins extraordinary, I have had some considerable checks and warnings from within; but still I struggled with them, and so wore them off again. One day, at an

atheistical meeting in the house of a person of quality, I undertook to manage the cause, and was the principal disputant against God and religion; and for my performances received the applause of the whole company. Upon this my mind was terribly struck, and I immediately replied thus to myself—'Good God, that a man that walks upright, that sees the wonderful works of God, and has the use of his senses and reason, should use them to the defying of his Creator!' But though this was a good beginning towards my conversion, to find my conscience touched for my sins, yet it went off again: nay, all my life long, I had a secret value and reverence for an honest man, and loved morality in others. But I had formed an odd scheme of religion to myself, which would solve all that God or conscience might force upon me; yet I was never reconciled to the business of Christianity; nor had I that reverence for the Gospel of Christ, which I ought to have had."

This state of mind continued till the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah was read to him, together with some other parts of the sacred scriptures; when it pleased God to fill his mind with such peace and joy in believing, on which he used to enlarge in a very familiar and affectionate manner, applying the whole to his own humiliation and encouragement.

"O blessed God," he would say, "can such a horrid creature as I am, be accepted by thee, who have denied thy being, and contemned thy power? Can there be mercy and pardon for me? Will God own such a wretch as I?"

In the middle of his sickness he said still farther:—"Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me? O mighty Saviour, never but through thine infinite love and satisfaction! O never but by the purchase of thy blood!" adding—"that with all abhorrence he reflected upon his former life—that from his heart he repented of all that folly and madness of which he had been guilty." He had a strong and growing esteem for the sacred scriptures, and evidently saw their divine fulness and excellency: "For having spoken to his heart, he acknowledged, all the seeming absurdities and contradictions fancied by men of corrupt and reprobate judgments, were vanished;

and the excellency and beauty of them appeared conspicuously, now that he was come to receive the truth in the love of it."

During his sickness, he had a hearty concern for the pious education of his children, wishing "his son might never be a wit, one of those wretched creatures who pride themselves in abusing God and religion, denying his being or his providence; but that he might become an honest man, and of a truly religious character, which only could be the support and blessing of his family."

One of his companions coming to see him on his death bed, he said to him:—"O remember that you contemn God no more. He is an avenging God, and will visit you for your sins; and will, I hope, in mercy, teach your conscience, sooner or later, as he has done mine. You and I have been friends and sinners together a great while, therefore I am the more free with you. We have been all mistaken in our conceits and opinions; our persuasions have been false and groundless; therefore I pray God grant you repentance."

When he drew towards the last stage of his sickness, he said, "If God should spare me yet a little longer time here, I hope to bring glory to his name, proportionably to the dishonour I have done to him in my whole life; and particularly by my endeavours to convince others, and to assure them of the danger of their condition, if they continued impenitent; and to tell them how graciously God hath dealt with me."

And when he came within still nearer views of his dissolution, about three or four hours before it, he said,—"I shall now die: but, oh! what unspeakable glories do I see! What joys beyond thought or expression am I sensible of! I am assured of God's mercy to me through Jesus Christ! Oh! how I long to die, and to be with my Saviour!"

For the admonition of others, and to undo, as much as was in his power, the mischief of his former conduct, he subscribed the following recantation, and ordered it to be published after his death:

"For the benefit of all those whom I may have drawn into sin by my example and encouragement, I leave to the world this my last declaration; which I deliver in the

presence of the great God, who knows the secrets of all hearts, and before whom I am now appearing to be judged; that from the bottom of my soul I detest and abhor the whole course of my former wicked life; that I think I can never sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who has given me a true sense of my pernicious opinions and vile practices, by which I have hitherto lived without hope, and without God in the world—have been an open enemy to Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite to the holy spirit of grace; and the greatest testimony of my charity to such, is to warn them, in the name of God, as they regard the welfare of their immortal souls, no more to deny his Being or his Providence, or despise his goodness; no more to make a mock of sin, or contemn the pure and excellent religion of my ever blessed Redeemer, through whose merits alone, I, one of the greatest of sinners, do yet hope for mercy and forgiveness. Amen."

LEECHMAN,

late principal of the College of Glasgow, at the close of his life, thus addressed the son of a worthy nobleman who was designed for the Church, and the early part of whose education had been much under the doctor's eye:

"You see the situation I am in: I have not many days to live: I am glad you have an opportunity of witnessing the tranquility of my last moments. But it is not tranquility and composure alone; it is joy and triumph; it is complete exultation." His features kindled, his voice rose as he spoke. "And whence," says he, "does this exultation spring? from that book," pointing to a bible that lay on the table—"from that book, too much neglected indeed, but which contains invaluable treasures! treasures of joy and rejoicing! for it makes us certain that this mortal shall put on immortality."

DEATH.

Nothing is so sure as death, and nothing so uncertain as the time. I may be too old to live, I can never be too young to die; I will therefore live every hour, as if I were to die the next.

No. 20

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE PRACTICAL USES OF THE ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM.

Extracts from a Circular Letter of the Northamptonshire (England) Baptist Association.

That Christian baptism is properly administered only by immersion, and to those who make a credible profession of faith in Christ, it is no part of our present design to prove. Addressing ourselves to you, we shall take each of these particulars for granted. The sole object to which we now request your attention is, the *influence* of this ordinance, (where it produces its proper effects) in promoting piety in individuals, and purity in the church.

There is no part of true religion that is merely speculative: the whole is designed and adapted to sanctify the soul. We may presume, therefore, that if baptism be an ordinance of God, and of perpetual obligation in the church, it is of importance to Christian practice.

But it is not on presumptive evidence that we wish to rest the improvement of this institution, any more than the institution itself: neither shall we go about to connect with it acknowledged duties by imaginary alliances; but shall confine ourselves to those uses of the ordinance which are actually made, or suggested in the New Testament. We could address many things to parents, and things of importance too, on bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: we could also urge it upon the children of believers, that they were cast upon the Lord from their earliest infancy: but as we find nothing of this kind in the Scriptures *connect-*

ed with baptism, however important these things would be in their place, they would be altogether irrelevant while treating on this ordinance.

Baptism is a Divine institution pertaining to the kingdom of the Messiah, or the gospel dispensation. John received it "from heaven," and administered it to the Jews, who, on his proclaiming that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand," confessed their sins. Jesus gave sanction to it by his example; and, after his resurrection, when all power in heaven and earth was committed to him, confirmed, and extended it to believers of all nations. Whatever circumstantial differences there might be, therefore, between the baptism of John and that of Christ, they were substantially the same. There were things in former ages which bore a *resemblance* to it; as, the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark, the passage of the Israelites through the sea, divers washings or bathings prescribed by the Mosaic ritual, &c. but the thing itself existed not, till it was revealed to the immediate forerunner of Christ.

The principal design of it appears to be, *a solemn and practical profession of the Christian religion.* Such was the baptism of John, who "said unto the people, that they should believe on him who should come after him; that is, on Christ Jesus." And such was that in the times of the apostles. Paul, addressing himself to the churches in Galatia, who, after having professed to believe in Christ, cleaved to the Mosaic law as a medium of justification, thus speaks: "The law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith: but after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have* PUT ON CHRIST." The allusion is to the putting on of apparel; as when one that enters into the service of a prince, puts on his distinguishing attire: and the design of the sacred writer is to remind those of them who had before professed the Jewish religion, that by a solemn act of their own they had, as it were, put off Moses, and put on Christ. There is a putting on of Christ which is internal, and consists in relinquishing the former lusts, and being of the mind

of Christ; (Romans xiii. 14.) but that which is referred to appears to be an open *profession* of his name, to the renouncing of every thing that stood in competition with him. It was therefore true of "as many as had been baptized," whether they abode in the truth or not. And even their being "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," seems to express what they were in profession, rather than what they were in fact. They had by their baptism disowned all dependance on the privileges of birth, and the adoption which pertained to them as the children of Abraham; declared their acquiescence in that power, or privilege, to become the sons of God, which the gospel imparts to them that believe. The mention of this was perfectly in point, as it greatly heightened the evil of their defection. The amount is, *That as many as were baptized in the primitive ages were voluntary agents, and submitted to this ordinance for the purpose of making a solemn and practical profession of the Christian faith.* It was their oath of allegiance to the King of Zion; that by which they avowed the Lord to be their God. Hence a rejection of it involved "a rejection of the counsel of God." (Luke vii. 30.) The sin of the Pharisees and lawyers consisted not in their refusing to submit to baptism as unbelievers; but in embracing the Messiah, and so putting on the badge of his profession. Their rejection of the sign was justly construed as a rejection of the thing signified; as when a rebel refuses to take the oath of allegiance, it is construed as a refusal of submission and subjection to his rightful prince.

Such, brethren, is the profession we have made. We have not only declared in words, our repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; but have said the same things by our baptism. We have solemnly surrendered ourselves up to Christ, taking him to be our prophet, priest, and king; engaging to receive his doctrine, to rely on his atonement, and to obey his laws. The vows of God are upon us. We have even sworn to keep his righteous judgments; and, without violating the oath of God, cannot go back. If it be a sin not to confess the Lord Jesus, through fear or shame, it is a still greater sin after we have confessed him, to turn from the holy commandment.

The religion of Jesus consists partly of *truths* to be believed, and partly of *precepts* to be obeyed; and the ordinance of baptism furnishes motives for a faithful adherence to both.

We have been baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;" and have thus practically avowed our belief in them. It was at Jordan that the Father bore witness to his well-beloved Son, and that the Holy Spirit descended upon him; hither, therefore, in the early ages, men were directed to repair, that they might learn the doctrine of the trinity. If we relinquish this doctrine, we virtually relinquish our baptism. Of this there need not be a more convincing proof than the inclination which has been discovered by those who have renounced the doctrine, to disuse the form of baptizing in the name of the Sacred Three.

We have also professed by our baptism to embrace that great salvation which is accomplished by the united influence of the Sacred Three. We have in effect declared our acquiescence in the freeness of the Father's grace, in the all-sufficient atonement of the Son, and in the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit: for these are the principal things by which, in the New Testament account of the economy of grace, each is distinguished. Nor can we renounce them, without virtually renouncing our baptism.

The immersion of the body in *water*, which is a purifying element, contains a profession of our faith in Christ, through the shedding of whose blood we are cleansed from all sin. Hence, baptism in the name of Christ is said to be "for the remission of sins." (Acts ii. 38. xxii. 16.) Not that there is any such virtue in the element, whatever be the quantity; nor in the ceremony, though of Divine appointment: but it contains a *sign* of the way in which we must be saved. Sin is washed away in baptism in the same sense as Christ's flesh is eaten, and his blood drank, in the Lord's supper; the sign, when rightly used, leads to the thing signified. Remission of sin is ascribed, by Peter, not properly to baptism; but to the *name* in which the parties were to be baptized. Thus also Saul was directed to "*wash away his sins*, calling on *the name of the Lord.*" Nearly akin to this is the

idea conveyed to us in the first epistle of Peter: "The long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were *saved by water*. The like figure whereunto baptism doth *now save us*, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter iii. 20, 21.) The salvation of Noah and his family by the ark was a *figure* of our salvation by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The ark for a time was surrounded, as it were, with waters from above, and from beneath: but it survived its trial, and those who were in it were at length brought safe to land. Christ also for a time sustained the deluge of wrath due to our sins; but survived the trial, rising triumphantly from the dead, and thereby saved us from everlasting death. Of this great transaction baptism is *a like figure*. It is another sign of the same thing. The resemblance of baptism by immersion to the death and resurrection of Christ, and the suitableness of one to signify our faith in the other, are manifest. It is thus that baptism doth *now save us*: not as putting away the filth of the flesh; (for all the virtue contained in the ordinance itself is "the answer of a good conscience toward God") but as affording a sign of our salvation by the victorious resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And as we are taught by our baptism to adhere to the doctrine of God our Saviour, so we are furnished with motives to adorn it by a *holy conversation*. Thus it is introduced in the epistles to the Romans and Colossians as a sign of our being *dead*, and buried, to the principles and pursuits of the present world; and, by faith in Christ, *raised* as into a new world. (Romans vi. 3—12. Col. ii. 12.) The *death* of Christ is emphatically mentioned as that into which we are baptized—"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his *death?* Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism *into death*; that like as Christ died, and was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Christ's dying *for* sin afforded a most powerful motive for our dying *to* it; and the immersion of the body in baptism,

being "in the likeness" of the former, furnishes an additional motive to the latter.

The leading idea suggested by a death and burial seems to be that of *separation from the world.* There is no greater line of separation than that which is drawn between the dead and the living. The dead know not any thing; and have no portion in all that is done under the sun. Such is the line which is drawn by the faith of the operation of God, between the world renewed and the world depraved; of which, baptism is the appointed sign. If, after this, we are found among evil doers, we may well be considered and shunned as a kind of apparitions, which have no proper concern in the affairs of mortals.

The apostle applied this reasoning against a conformity to abrogated ceremonies. "If ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances?" (Col. ii. 20.) The same reasoning is applicable to other things. If we be dead with Christ, why, as though living, are we subject to the lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, which are of the world? Why are any of us conformed to this world; and not rather transformed by the renewing of our minds? If we be dead, and our life be hid with Christ in God; why are not our affections set on things above, and not on things on the earth? We cannot but express our concern, that persons professing godliness should be carried away by the course of this world, as many are; meanly imitating the ungodly; whose conduct they ought rather to reprove. Such imitation, so far as it operates, contains a virtual renunciation of our baptism. The ideas of baptism and a separation from the world, whether connected by us or not, are strongly associated in the minds of men in general. After this, we cannot unite with them in evil, without drawing upon ourselves their most pointed censures. They may labour to seduce us for the sake of comforting themselves; and while accomplishing their purpose may suppress their private thoughts of us, and even compliment us for our liberality: but if we comply, their pretended esteem will be turned into reproach. Nor ought we to consider this as an evil; but rather as a

mercy. God hath hereby set a hedge about us, which tends more than a little to preserve us from temptation. If any think otherwise, and feel uneasy that they cannot act like other men, without drawing upon themselves the censures of mankind, it is a dark sign that their hearts are not right in the sight of God.

Nor is this ordinance adapted merely to separate between believers and unbelievers, *individually* considered: its design is also to draw a line of distinction between *the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of Satan.* Whatever may be said of baptism, as it is now generally understood and practised, and of the personal religion of those who practise it, it was *originally* appointed to be the boundary of visible Christianity. This is a principle, which, if properly acted upon, would go far to prevent the confounding of the church and the world; and which, consequently, tends more than any thing of the kind to counteract ecclesiastical degeneracy and corruption. Had the Christian church in all ages admitted none to baptism, from whomsoever descended, but those who professed to repent and believe the gospel, it is scarcely conceivable that any others would have been admitted to the Lord's supper: and if so, a stream of corruption which has actually deluged it with antichristianism, would have been diverted at the spring-head. The church might indeed have been corrupted from other causes, but these would have been merely *accidental.* Hypocrites and formalists might have imposed themselves upon it, as they did in some degree in the apostolic age; but they would have been intruders. Whatever of this kind might have existed, believers could not have been *constitutionally* yoked together with unbelievers. The carnal descendants of godly people could not have claimed a place in Christ's visible kingdom. The church could not have become national, embracing as its children all who are born in a Christianized country, without any profession of personal religion. Princes and nobles, if worthy, would have been received into its communion as brethren; but not as rulers or patrons: and if unworthy, refused; even though an exposure to persecution had been the consequence—But if persons be admitted to baptism without any profession of personal religion, or

upon the profession of others on their behalf, their admission to the Lord's supper will in most cases follow as a matter of course. Indeed it *ought* to follow: for though amongst evangelical dissenters these things are separated, yet from the beginning it was not so. Neither scripture nor the practice of the ancient churches affords a single example of a baptized person, unless his conduct was grossly immoral, being ineligible to communion And if all who are now baptized, be admitted to the supper, the line of separation will be broken; the church will be no longer "a garden enclosed:" but an open wilderness, where every beast of prey can range at pleasure. Thus, indeed, it was foretold it should be. The writer of the Apocalypse, describing the corruptions which should prevail in the visible church during the twelve hundred and sixty years' reign of antichrist, represents it under the form of the *outer court* of the temple being *left out* of the measurement as profane, and *given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot*, in like manner as the holy place and holy city had been trodden down by the heathen, in the time of Antiochus.

As the principle of believers' baptism, properly acted upon, would prevent the admission of all unconverted characters, except hypocrites and self-deceivers, so it would have its influence in repelling *them*. The habits of some hypocritical characters, it is true, would render it an easy thing to overleap this boundary; but it is equally true, that, to others, it would be an effectual bar. There are not a few in the religious world, who would like well to be members of a Christian church, especially where the pastor is a man of respectability, provided they could be admitted without drawing upon themselves the laugh of the irreligious. There is reason to believe that many persons of genteel connexions, who wish to be thought religious, and whose consciences approve of believers' baptism, are withheld by this kind of shame from offering themselves to our churches. An ordinance which thus operates, possesses a mark of its pertaining to that kingdom which is "not of this world," and into which it is "hard for a rich man to enter."

As the leading idea suggested by a death and burial is that of *separation* from the world, so the principal

thing denoted by a resurrection is an entrance into a *new* state of being. Such is that "newness of life," of which the emersion of the body from the waters of baptism is a sign, and to which it furnishes an important motive. The religion of Jesus does not consist in mere negatives. It is not enough that we be dead to the world: we must be alive to God. With real Christians, old things are passed away, and all things are become new. Unless our baptism, therefore, be merely a sign, or an unmeaning ceremony, our hopes, fears, sorrows, joys, companions, principles, and pursuits are opposite to those of this world. Even a partial return to it is inconsistent with our baptismal vows. If those who profess to be dead to the world cannot walk in the course of it, without being considered and shunned as a kind of apparitions; those who are alive from the dead cannot return, without resembling a living character who should take up his abode in a sepulchre.

A few general reflections will conclude this epistle.

The baptism of a number of serious Christians is an interesting and impressive spectacle. Often on such solemn occasions, have we witnessed the falling tear; not only from the parties baptized, and others immediately connected with them, but from indifferent spectators. We could appeal to the consciences of many serious Christians, whether they did not receive their first convictions of the reality of religion at such opportunities? We could appeal to all of you who have been in the habit of attending the administration of this ordinance, whether it has not frequently furnished you with the most solemn and tender reflections? Has not the sight of a number of young Christians, offering themselves willingly to the Lord, touched the secret springs of holy sensibility? Yes: you have been reminded by it of your own solemn engagements, and led to inquire in what manner they have been fulfilled. You have remembered the days of your espousals, when you first went after your Saviour, as in the wilderness, and have been sweetly impelled to renew the solemn surrender. Nor have your reflections been confined to yourselves: you have considered these new accessions to the church of God as supplying the place of others that were taken

away, and as fulfilling the promise, "Instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children." Thus, when the ranks of an army in a besieged city are thinned by repeated engagements, and the hearts of survivors are ready to faint, a reinforcement arrives: a body of new companions throw themselves in to its relief, and inspire them with new vigour.

Further: If the foregoing remarks be just, the importance of believers' baptism must appear in a very different light, from that in which some have represented it. If the ordinary acknowledgments of many who live in the neglect of this ordinance, and disapprove of the zeal of others who submit to it, may be considered as expressive of their principles, their conduct is not owing to a solid conviction, arising from impartial inquiry accompanied with prayer, that it is unscriptural, or that they have already been baptized according to the institution of Christ; but to a notion that it is of *little or no account.* If it be of little or no account to bind ourselves to the Lord, *in the way of his own prescribing;* to confess his name before men; to avow our being dead to the world, and alive to him; to preserve the church from being constitutionally corrupted, and yoked together with unbelievers; to obey his commandments who saith, "Repent and be baptized, *every one of you:*" and to follow his example who yielded obedience to this institute, saying, "Thus it *becometh us* to fulfil all righteousness"—then may this excuse be admitted. But if these things be important, then is believers' baptism important; and all attempts to depreciate it are offensive in the sight of him who is the Lord and Lawgiver of Zion.

Finally, brethren, it becomes us to beware lest that which is good in itself should, through the corruption of our nature, become an occasion of evil. There is perhaps no temptation more common among religious people, than to think too highly of themselves on account of their advantages. Where such a spirit is cherished, baptism may become an idol, and the table of the Lord itself a snare. It is more than possible that some may so value themselves on account of their baptism, as to make it a substitute for a life of holiness and universal righte-

ousness. It appears that some amongst the Corinthians approached too near, at least, to this spirit. They had been baptized,—they had eaten and drank at the table of the Lord,—yet they trifled with idolatry, and worldly lusts. "I would not that ye should be ignorant (saith Paul) how all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ. But with many of them God was not well pleased; for they were overthrown in the wilderness.—These things were our examples.—Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!" (1 Cor. x.) As if he had said, 'Are you members of a community which hath the promised presence of Christ? Our fathers also were *under the cloud.* Hath God interposed in your favour? They *passed through the sea,* as on dry land. Have you been baptized? So where they. They *descended* in a body into the sea; were *buried,* as it were, by the cloud above them, and the waters on each hand of them; and afterwards *ascended* on the other side. Have you been admitted to the holy supper? They also ate of that food, and drank of that stream, the spiritual intent of which was much the same. Yet all this afforded them no security, when they provoked the Divine jealousy. Notwithstanding these privileges they fell, and were destroyed of the destroyer. These things are recorded for *our* admonition.' —Of what account then will our baptism be to us, if instead of being dead to the world and alive to God, we be the reverse? Will baptism save us? No: it will bear witness against us!

And though we may not fall into so fatal an error, as to substitute baptism in the place of holiness, righteousness, and godliness; yet if we cherish a fond conceit of ourselves, magnifying our advantages, to the neglect of a spirit of humble watchfulness; our baptism, instead of aiding us, will become a snare. We do not always act up to our advantages. It is very possible that Christians who are behind us in this particular, may, notwithstanding, be before us in their general character. It were

vain and foolish to imagine, that our possessing the truth in one instance, will secure us from error in every other; or that our fulfilling this command of Christ, however important, will ensure a course of universal obedience.

Let us never forget that, however adapted this or that ordinance, form, or mode of church government, may be to promote our spiritual interests, yet if we rest in the means, they will deceive us; or rather, we shall deceive ourselves. It is the presence of Christ only that can keep us alive, either as individuals, or as churches. While, therefore, we recommend the means which he hath prescribed, we devoutly add, with the apostle, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all!" *Amen.*

THE END.

☞Tracts may be obtained on application to the Agent.

N°. 21

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

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THE

SUREST AND SAFEST

WAY OF THRIVING.

"There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty."
Prov. xi. 24.

It was the benevolent counsel of the apostle Paul to the first Christians, "as we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith:" and if this little tract should be successful in convincing you, that the Father of mercy not only notices, but graciously promises to reward the good that Christians do in his name; that the surest way to fill our treasury is to empty it, by performing works of love for God, and of benevolence for man, it may be hoped, Christian reader, that you will not only embrace opportunities of doing good, but also endeavour to create them, and thus be always abounding in the work of the Lord, that your labour may not be in vain in the Lord.

What the apostle says of godliness, will apply to Christian liberality, which is a branch of it. It is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Let us now ponder in our hearts such texts as Deut. xv. 10; "Thou shalt surely give him, (thy poor brother, v. 9.) and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him: because that for this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works;" in which beautiful passage two things are evident; that prosperity depends upon the blessings of God; and that the divine blessing is entailed upon the charitable. Observe the same in Prov. iii. 9. "Honour the Lord with thy substance

and with the first-fruits of thy increase." And is not God honoured when we give to him that needeth? The promise immediately follows, verse 10. "So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." If then you love yourselves, beware of *laying up* what you should *lay out*.

You will find the same generous sentiment in Isaiah lviii. 7, 8. And how beautifully is it taught by the Saviour, who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many! Luke vi. 38. "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again." Such is the blessing he will receive who considereth the poor. And the Saviour who knows your ability, as well as your heart; and who accepteth according to what a man hath, and not according to what a man hath not, hath declared, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Is it reasonable that the husbandman who sows should expect to reap, and to reap more than he sows? so certain is the gracious reward of Christian liberality, that in his blessed word God compares it to sowing. But observe, 2 Cor. ix. 6. "He who soweth sparingly, shall reap sparingly; and he who soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." Is it reasonable that a man who lends his money should have it paid him again with interest? So sure is the reward of this duty, that the scriptures compare it to lending. Hear Solomon, Prov. xix. 17. "He that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given, will he pay him again." Such a loan is upon no less than divine security. Make it evident, Christian, that you think the security good, for God is not a man that he should lie.

And it is pleasant to observe how abundantly the sacred history illustrates this doctrine; that temporal prosperity is promised to the benevolent servant of God. Read the history of the widow of Sarepta, who kindly provided for the prophet Elijah, in time of famine, 1 Kings xvii. 8—24, and you will learn and admire how wonderfully the Lord rewarded her. Meditate on the kindness of the amiable and generous Shunamite to the prophet Elisha, and of the

goodness and grace that followed her, as you will find it beautifully described in 2 Kings iv. 8—37. How noble and exemplary was the charity of Job, who delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had no helper: who was eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and a father to the poor; who made the widow's heart to sing for joy, and received the blessing of him that was ready to perish! It is true, Satan was permitted to deprive this great and good man of his large possessions, but what became of him after Satan had done his worst? The Lord turned the captivity of Job, and gave him twice as much as he had before, and blessed his latter end more than his beginning.

Nor did a kind Providence forget those poor barbarous islanders, who showed kindness to the apostle Paul and his companions, when they were shipwrecked on their coast. They reaped as soon as they sowed. They doubtless considered themselves abundantly rewarded, when as an immediate return for their kindness, their sick friends were restored to health. The good works and alms of pious Dorcas, and the devout centurion; the example of the Macedonians, in giving more than could have been expected; the conscientiousness of Jacob in devoting a tenth to the Lord, are all commended in that book, in which to be praised, is to receive the honour that comes from God. And whatsoever was written aforetime, was written for our learning, and for our admonition. Moses, and the prophets—the law and the gospel—evangelists and apostles, all prove that with such sacrifices God is well pleased: and who would not please him? And it is very remarkable, that among all the instances of sin, in which good men in scripture, are recorded to have fallen, (and there are few into which some or others of them have not fallen) there is no instance in all the scriptures of any good man being charged with covetousness.

A variety of instances similar to the above, might be introduced from the lives of many of the excellent of the earth in latter days, and in our own country; and they would all prove, as it has been well expressed by an ancient father, that not he that keeps his wealth, but he that distributeth it, is rich; neither is it the having, but the laying out of riches, that makes men rich. The late John

Thornton, of Clapham, Eng. was a great example; he obtained his riches by honourable merchandise, and in the course of his long and useful life, he gave away in religious and charitable uses, the amazing sum of £150,000 sterling, or $666,000. This alone would be evidence how divine providence prospered his hands; but besides all this, he left a large fortune to each of his four children.

Now this and many other instances which might be mentioned, not only illustrate and confirm the sentiment which we began, that the surest and safest way of thriving is to do all the good in our power, but at the same time they display the goodness, and the righteousness, and the faithfulness of God. For he condescends to assure us, that he is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of love, which we have showed to his name, when we minister to his necessitous people. If he does not forget, then he will remember, and for him to remember is to recompense. Although we can never make God our debtor by merit (for we can give him nothing but his own) yet he may be our debtor by his own free and generous promise, and in this way he condescends to become so; and the sacred truths and striking instances here recorded, show that he never remains long in his people's debt; but gives them as the reward of his grace manifold more in the present life, and in the world to come, life everlasting.

To those who feel the force of these observations, a few directions on this important subject will be acceptable.

Be sure that, in the first place, you give *yourselves* to the Lord, and with yourselves devote all you have and are to his service and glory. He has given his beloved Son for you. This is a sufficient motive why you should give body and soul to him; and if you devote these, you will keep nothing back.

Let the Lord Jesus Christ be the altar on which you present all your gifts; for he alone can sanctify both the gift and the giver. Your persons and your works must be accepted in the beloved; for neither can be acceptable to God but through Jesus Christ. When his love constrains you to Christian benevolence, you may hope God will accept you in it for his sake.

Give all you give with a willing, a compassionate, a grateful heart. God loves a cheerful giver. Let the ob-

ject of your bounty see, not only that you give, but that you give, with bowels of mercy and compassion; and that it is the love of God inspires you with love to man. The kindness with which Christian liberality is bestowed, will double the value of it with a grateful receiver. Hence this beautiful exhortation—"he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity,"—that is, without either extolling or debasing your gift; without ostentation, without affectation, without pride.

Endeavour to maintain a single eye to the glory of God: keep self out of sight, and say, of thine own we have given. Whenever the promised recompense comes, receive it not as the reward of any merit in you, but as the gift of rich mercy and free grace. For it is of his mercy that you have any thing to give, and of his grace that you have a heart to give, and that he appoints you the honour of being his steward, and will accept you in your work.

Give in proportion as the Lord has given to you. Paul teaches the Corinthians that money is to be weekly laid up for charity, *according as God hath prospered you*. God expects fruit according to the seed he sows. The rich must not expect that God will accept mites, where he expects pounds. If Christians are commanded to work with their hands rather than not have something for the needy, what must be expected from those who abound in the world's goods? You are stewards of what he has given you, and it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful, for soon you must give an account of your stewardship. Let those whose circumstances are straightened, practise a pious economy, that they may have something to spare. Upon all occasions gather up the fragments that nothing be lost. This was the command of him to whom belonged the cattle upon a thousand hills, and who could multiply loaves and fishes at his pleasure.

Let charity be sanctified by prayer and thanksgiving: by prayer that it may do good, that the blessing of God may attend it; by thanksgiving, that his providence has placed you amongst those who are enabled to give, and not amongst those who are compelled to receive; that he has blessed you with the means of giving, and given you a heart to give; and that his bounty, his greatness, accepts as a gift what he might demand as a debt.

But perhaps there may be some readers of this tract,

who have, what they conceive, strong reasons why they expect to be excused from giving much, if any thing, to others; and therefore conclude that they have little to do with the above reasonings and directions. These objections shall be considered.

One says, *I have a large family to provide for, and I am not rich.* But remember, liberality secures the blessing of God upon ourselves and families; and that blessing is the best part of the inheritance which it is said a good man leaves to his children. Be assured your liberality will ultimately benefit your children, more than your avarice. It is not always reputable for a Christian to die very wealthy. No blessing will attend that part of their inheritance which has been saved from the cause of God and from the poor.—David represents the children of a good man as being benefitted by his liberality. *He is even merciful and lendeth, and his seed is blessed.* Let not the number of your children prevent you from doing good, lest Providence should reduce the number, that you may have more to spare. Because it is your duty to provide for your family, it will not follow that it is not our duty to assist in providing for the needy. Why is a good man's compassion to the poor called his righteousness, which shall endure for ever? Not because it can obtain heaven for him; but to show that giving alms and doing good is a special branch of that righteousness and justice which we owe to our poor neighbours.

Another says, *Although I give little, yet I give as much as others; as much as some whose incomes are larger than mine.* But remember to their own master they stand or fall. You will be judged, not according to what *they* did, or left undone; but according to what was in the power of *your* hands to do. You will not be called to give account of your neighbour's alms, but every one must give account of himself to God. Every man must prove his own work, that he may have rejoicing in himself alone. If you do not give alms of such things as you have, none of those things are clean unto you.

A third promises, *When I have realized more property, I intend to be more charitable.* But perhaps your poor neighbour is suffering of want, while you are making a fortune, out of which you intend to relieve him hereafter. Besides, if you do not now do what good you can, depend

upon it, you will not hereafter do what you think you would, though you should have abundance. Riches will never cure a worldly mind. The love of money generally increases with the increase of it. If you had a willing mind, you would do what you could: and that she did so, was the high praise of Mary of Bethany, pronounced by him who seeth not as man seeth.

But another says, *I am old and must keep what I have.* Let the aged remember how soon it will be for ever out of their power to show their gratitude to God by their benevolence to man. If you are old, it is a weighty reason why you should set your affections on things above.

It is also objected by some, *I have been imposed upon, and it makes me averse to give.* But remember, if you gave from a proper motive, the kind affection to which you yielded was its own reward, and the heart that never was imposed upon is probably a hard one. Let not your charity be overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. Our Lord knew that only one out of the ten lepers whom he healed, would be grateful; but he healed them all. Let the disciple be as his master. Let him not be weary in well doing.

But after all, says another, *I have a right to do what I will with mine own; and no one has a right to dictate to me.* But it is your duty to examine yourself, and to think whether you are preparing for the account you must hereafter give of what you call your own; and of what you say you may dispose of as you please.

Christian reader! are there any of the household of faith—any of the poor sheep of Christ—any of his faithful ministers, who are eating the bread, and drinking the water of affliction? Is there in your neighbourhood, a fellow-man, who is without the necessaries of life, while you have enough and to spare? then whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. And remember, that he that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward: and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward. And whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, he shall in no wise lose his reward. On the other hand beware lest the curse of the

covetous, mentioned in James v. 3., come upon you. "Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days."

Therefore, let us consider one another to provoke unto love and good works.

SELF-DENIAL.

The lesson of self-denial is of the utmost importance, and one which we find most difficult to attain. It is made the condition of discipleship by Jesus Christ; so that, except in some degree we practise it, our claim to the character and privileges of Christians is invalid. But what is its nature? Surely it does not consist in monkish austerity or ascetic rigour? It is neither a long pilgrimage, with its hardships; a useless seclusion, with its deceptions; a sour look, with its disgusts; or a bare head, or empty stomach, with their inconveniences. These are not the self-denial required by the Gospel, sanctioned by Christ, and practised by saints. What is it then? It is a holy, persevering, prayerful opposition to the desires, appetites, wishes, and tempers of corrupt nature. It is submission to Providence. It is resignation to affliction. It is deference to others. It is the abdication of a pertinacious adherence to our own right, for the sake of peace. But *why* should we thus deny ourselves? Is it reasonable; is it manly; is it necessary? It is all three. Is it not reasonable to deny and oppose what is corrupt in its origin, baneful in its growth, and destructive in its end? And such are nature and sin. It is manly; for then we prove that the mind, the soul, the reason, holds the seat and the sceptre of discretion and government, while all the inferior passions obey. It is necessary, for the discovery of our grace, for the good of society, for our own peace and salvation; and it will not require much, either of the art of logic, or the power of eloquence, to transform all these *reasons* into *motives*, to induce to the adoption and practice of self-denial.

If we would manifest our "*love of life, and desire to see good days*," we must learn this important lesson; for it is an aphorism worthy of a deep and permanent impression on the tablet of our mind, *that self-denial is the source of our highest gratification.*

No. 22

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MEMOIR OF

KRISHNA-PAL,

The first Hindoo, in Bengal, who broke the chain of the Cast, by embracing the gospel.

Krishna-Pal* was born in a part of Chandernagore, called Bura-Gram, somewhere about the year 1764, for he used to relate that he was a boy four or five years old at the time of the famine in Bengal in 1769-70. His father's name was Moolukchund-Pal; his mother's Nulita. Agreeably to the customs of the Hindoos he followed his father's trade, who belonged to the chootur, or carpenter cast.

Krishna was, for some time, the disciple of the Malpara Gosai, but afterwards became a follower of Ram Shurun-Pal, of Ghospara.—Respecting this last change of teacher, Krishna himself has written an account in a letter addressed to W. Skinner, Esq. of Bristol, who kindly supported Krishna for some years before his death.

My dear friend in the Lord Jesus Christ,

I have not the pleasure of your acquaintance in this world, but if I remain steadfast in the Lord Jesus Christ, I hope to meet you in the world to come.

I was a disciple of or worshipper of brahmuns and the gooroo, (the spiritual guide) and when the latter visited me, with the idea of obtaining his favour, I washed his

* This name denotes one of the flock of Krishna, the Hindoo idol, pal meaning a flock.

feet, and took the water and sprinkled my breast and head therewith: this would relieve me from my daily worship, as "there is no occasion for worship, when the presence of the gooroo can be enjoyed." While thus I spent my time, I was taken severely ill, when a person from Ghospara came, and told me, that if I would become the follower of the true gooroo, I should then get over this affliction. I consented to this: he then taught me the first initiatory incantation, "O Kurta, the moon, the Great Lord, I walk and speak at thy pleasure, thou art with me, and I am fed with whatever thou feedest me." Some time after I had received these incantations the Lord restored me to health, and I became a gooroo myself, teaching many others this incantation, and making them my disciples. In this way I spent sixteen years of my life, after which the Lord sent his grace into India. One day, as I went to purchase sweetmeats for my children, I met Dr. Thomas, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Brunsden, who had gone out towards Maniktula bazar, to preach the gospel. Dr. Thomas called to me and said, Oh! Bengalee brother, where is the brahmun's school? I answered, at Bullubpore. He then said, Can I go and return back in an hour? I said, No. He then told me he would proclaim glad tidings, and asked me to attend. I consented, and he declared to me and others the tidings of salvation through the death of Jesus Christ, and said, that the sins of the human race required a great sacrifice, that those who believed in Christ's death would be saved from sin, because he offered his life as a sacrifice for sinners. And on that day the Lord was gracious to me. I then considered that no shastra* made an end of sin, and even among the people of Ghospara there was no provision for the pardon of sin. I began daily to examine into this amongst my friends and relations, and to be thoughtful how to get acquainted with the Missionaries. A circumstance now happened by which the Lord showed himself particularly gracious to me: as I was going to bathe in my tank, my foot slipped, and by the fall I dislocated my right arm. I was very much afflicted on this account, lest I should be unable to support my family.

* The Hindoo Scriptures.

A relative told me that there was a doctor in the mission house, and requested me to go to him or send for him. I sent my daughter and the child of a friend to beg that the doctor might come and see me. The Missionaries were at that time going to breakfast. The doctor seeing the two children, said to them, "Why are you come?" My daughter answered, "My father's right arm is broke, and he is much afflicted, will you come and see him?" Then Dr. Thomas came to my house, and speedily cured me, and said that the father chastises the son he loves, and by cutting the arm of his child saves him from danger in the small pox. After saying this he went home. The same afternoon Dr. Thomas and Mr. Marshman came again with some pieces of paper in their hands. They asked how I was? I answered that my arm was fixed but still was painful.—They gave the papers to me and to the by-standers to read. In this paper I read that he who confesseth and forsaketh his sins, and trusteth in the righteousness of Christ, obtains salvation. The next morning, Mr. Carey came to see me, and after inquiring how I was, told me to come to his house, and he would give me some medicine, by which through the blessing of God, the pain in my arm would be removed. I went and obtained the medicine, and through the mercy of God my arm was cured. From this time I made a practice of calling at the Mission house, where Mr. Ward and Mr. Felix Carey used to read and expound the Holy Bible to me. One day Dr. Thomas asked me whether I understood what I heard from Mr. Ward and Mr. F. Carey. I said, I understood that the Lord Jesus Christ gave his life up for the salvation of sinners, and that I believed it, and so did my friend Gokool. Dr. T. said, Then I can call you brother—come and let us eat together in love. At this time the table was set for luncheon, and all the Missionaries, and their wives, and I, and Gokool, sat down and ate together. It was reported all over the town by the servants that Krishna and Gokool had eaten with the Sahebs, and had become Europeans; and in returning home we were ill used by the populace.

My connexions now came to my house, and carried away my eldest daughter. Dr. T. hearing of this, came

and took two of my daughters to his house, and the youngest remained with me. And some neighbours took me and my wife before the magistrate, who inquired of them what fault I had committed? They answered that I had eaten with Europeans, and become one myself.—He told them he could do nothing, and that I might be carried before the Governor, which was done. The Governor put the same questions to my accusers, and received the same answers from them. He told them that I had not become a European, but a Christian, and had done right, and that he would answer all demands against me, and forbade them to injure me. I told the Governor that some of my relations had carried my daughter away. He immediately sent two persons, and had them brought before him, and commanded them to give my daughter back to me. They said, that I had lost cast, but my daughter had not. The Governor desired them again to give me back my daughter, and told them that when my son-in-law returned, he would explain every thing to him. They then gave me my daughter. In returning home with my daughter, the crowd, consisting of about 500 or 600 people, hissed and clapped their hands at us, and disgraced us by calling us *Feringees*.—My wife came crying, and said to me, You have acted in such a manner that all the people despise us, and call us *Feringees*. At this time Messrs. Carey and Marshman were seeking for us. We met in the road, and they were very sorry at seeing our distress. The crowd at this time moved away a little. Mr. Carey said to my wife, Do not weep. While he was speaking, he wept himself. He also said, this distress is not come upon you and your husband on account of any crime you have been guilty of, but for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. My wife's mind was comforted at this, and we returned home. Gokool said to me, Oh brother, you have just escaped one difficulty, and there is another about to happen. Our relations and the respectable people of this town have agreed to disguise themselves as robbers, and murder us to night, to prevent our destroying the cast of others. Hearing this I sent a woman to Mr. Ward to acquaint him of the design. Mr. Ward wrote to the Governor about it, who sent a sepoy to my house, and ordered him

if any people came to my house to question them, and if they did not answer, to fire at them. Through the sepoy being placed at my house there was no attempt made.

The next day Dr. T. sent for me, and told me that he should eat that day at my house, but forbade me to be at any extra expense on this account. I got victuals prepared at Gokool's house. Dr. T. came at 2 P. M. As he entered the house, Gokool's mother and wife ran out. Dr. T., Gokool and son, my four daughters, and myself sat down and ate together, while my wife and her sister waited on us. Dr. T. asked a blessing before and returned thanks after the meal. He returned home after the meal; and through excess of joy went into a state of derangement. Next day Gokool, my wife, and wife's sister, and myself, and Mr. F. Carey were received into the Church. On the Sabbath day, Messrs. Carey, Marshman, and Ward came to my house, and explained to us the subject of baptism. Gokool and the two women, through bashfulness, would not be baptized, but Mr. F. Carey and myself were baptized on that day. The report of my intended baptism having been previously spread, many people from Calcutta, Chandernagore, besides many of the inhabitants of Serampore, and my own relations, came to witness it. Some time after baptism Mr. Marshman walked with me to my house.

After this, the pastors of the church sent me and Gokool into Jessore to publish the Gospel. They told us to publish the glad tidings through the death of Jesus Christ without fear, and gave us a number of tracts to distribute. On our way thither, in several places, we published the word. I had a letter of introduction from Mr. Carey to the Judge, which I presented to him.—When the Judge had read it, he said to me, "are you Baptists?" We answered in the affirmative. He asked us what we wanted. I said that we wished to distribute the tracts which we brought with us, and which were extracts from the Bible. He told us we might give them to those who asked for them. After this we went into the town of Sahebgunj, and I read the fifth chapter of Matthew, and expounded it. Many people heard me and took the tracts. In the evening several brahmuns came

to the house we had put up at, and said to us, Sircars, we are come to ask you a question: will the lands of the brahmuns remain or not? We answered, we know nothing about that, but we have come to seek the salvation of the souls of men. They inquired what that was. We then gave them the history of the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension into heaven of Jesus Christ.—They inquired, if there was no salvation in their religion. I said, O Sirs, examine, and hold that which is right: among you sin is not forbidden, and no hatred of it enjoined. In your poorans, Ramayun, and Muhabharut, there are no directions for the forgiveness of sin, no knowledge of holiness, &c. but an account of the incarnations and power of your gods: can man be saved by them? They said, that if a sinner at the time of death repeats the name of Ram or Krishna, his sins will be forgiven, and he will obtain heaven. We said, that if that was sufficient to obtain salvation, pilgrimages, gifts to brahmuns, alms to the poor, and the daily worship were useless. Moreover, the blind could not lead the blind, for both would fall into the ditch. What, were not Ram and Krishna men? Ram destroyed the race of king Ravun, and Krishna killed his maternal uncle and a woman. Are these gods? They then said, These people are the destroyers of cast, and went away. We returned to Serampore. About a year afterwards, Mr. Marshman, brethren Seetaram and Kooveer and I went again into Jessore. In the town of Sahebgunj, on the market day, Mr. Marshman stood on his palankeen and preached; many heard, and the market was almost deserted: the overseer of the market went immediately and complained to the Judge, that a Saheb and three Bengalees had created a disturbance in the market, so that there was nothing sold or bought. The Judge sent two peons, and had us brought to him. Mr. M. and Seetaram went into the Judge's house, and I and Kooveer remained without. While Mr. M. was taking a luncheon with the Judge, Seetaram was asked by one of the native writers there, whether he was a Christian? When Seetaram had told him he was, the writer beat him, and tore off his necklace, and turned him out of the house. Seeing the distress of Seetaram, I went to his assistance,

and was served in the same manner. Mr. M. seeing this, endeavoured to bring us into the judge's house, when he was treated in a similar manner. After worship in the evening we returned to Serampore.

I have been unable to mention all my journeys with Messrs. Carey, Marshman, and Ward:—On one occasion, I went with Mr. Chamberlain to a fair at Gunga-Saugur, and we distributed tracts there. After this I went again with Mr. Chamberlain to Dinagepore, and after remaining there fourteen days with him, left, and went to Benares, and on the way spoke and preached at various places. I was there five days, and spoke and preached the Gospel. There the brahmuns said, I was a man from Serampore, and had been destroying the cast of several people there, and was come to do the same at Benares. They took me to the watch-house. I had with me three hundred books in the Nagree character. I was asked by the police native officer why I came to Benares, and I told him the object of my mission. He took a Bible from me, and read it, and appeared much surprised at it, and told me to go to the Judge at Secrole, and get his order for distributing these books. A peon was sent in charge of me, and ten or a dozen of the above brahmuns went with me to Secrole. I put the passport which Mr. Carey had given me, and a Bible into the Judge's hand. He read the passport, and asked whether I were a Christian, and advised me not to remain in that part of the country, as the people would injure me. From thence I went to Ramnugur, and preached before a raja's house about Christ's incarnation and atonement for the sins of mankind. I again returned to Serampore.

The Missionaries agreed to my living in Calcutta, which I did for five years. In rotation I used to preach in twenty houses, and occasionally in different parts of the city. During my residence there, many Europeans and natives were baptized.

After this, by the desire of the Missionaries, I went with a native brother to Sylhet. I had a letter of introduction to Mr. Smith of that place. In my journey I stopped and preached at Dacca. There some of the most respectable Musulmans sent for me, to whom I gave a Persian Bible, and lodged with them ten days. Proceed-

ing from thence, I made the word known at Ajmeer and Baitool. At Chatuk I met with Mr. Smith. After reading the letter, he returned it to me, and also gave me another to the Judge of Sylhet. When I arrived there I gave the Judge the letters, and, on his inquiring, told him the reasons of my coming into that part of the country. Mr. Smith arrived at Sylhet a few days after. The Judge desired to see the books I had brought with me, and was much pleased with them, and told me to give them to those who wanted them. I preached and distributed the tracts there.

The Judge wished me to go into the Khasee country, and gave introductory letters to a jemadar and subadar there, and also a sepoy as a guard. I was three days in going to that country. The jemadar and subadar gave me a lodging. I made known the glad tidings there. There I hope four sepoys, and two natives of the Khasee country, and a native of Assam, were converted. After a few days, the Judge and Mr. Smith arrived there. I told them that I was very glad, for my labours had been successful. They requested to see the above-mentioned seven people, and inquired of them whether they believed in the death of Christ, that he died for sinners, and whether they wished to be baptized. The gentlemen then wished me to baptize the seven men, and had a silver basin, filled with water, brought on the table, and requested me to begin the ordinance. I told them I had never seen baptism performed in that manner. Upon their inquiring about the mode I followed, I referred to the baptism of John mentioned in the New Testament. They then said, I might do it in the way I preferred, and we went to the Dhuvuleshwuree river. There were present eight rajas, and about six hundred Khaseeyas. I read the 6th chapter of Romans, expounded and prayed, and then baptized the seven men. I remained in that part of the country eight months, proclaiming the Gospel, and then returned to Serampore.

After this I took a journey to Cutwa, Beerbhoom and Berhampore, and baptized a woman at one of those places. I was three months out at this time.

My next journey was to English-bazar, where I lived six years, and baptized a man and a woman. I then

went to Dinagepore, and baptized four men and women there, and married two couple, Mr. Fernandez, the pastor of the church, being at that time ill. I again went to English-bazar, and was there till the next year, when I again journeyed to Dinagepore. While I was there this last time, Mr Fernandez baptized twelve persons, one of whom was a writer under the Judge. My grand-daughter being taken ill of a fever here, I was under the necessity of going to English-bazar to the doctor; fourteen days after my arrival there she died. On her death bed she requested me to read the Bible to her and pray for her, and I trust she departed this life with a lively faith in Christ. I returned to Serampore after eight months. Then, at the request of the Missionaries, I went and lived two months at Dacca with Mr. Leonard, and there preached the gospel.

I was baptized in 1801, and from that time to this have been employed in the service of God. Pray for me, that I may live a little longer, and that I may still be employed in the same work with all my mind, and that I may always enjoy the communion of the Holy Spirit. I am now preparing to take another journey to Dacca. I was formerly dead in the worship of idols, but believing in our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, I am no longer dead. You have employed me in making the gospel known to those who are dead in sin. O pray that God may preserve me, and crown my labours with success. I hope at the last to be received into eternal happiness.

It appears from this letter that Krishna carried the news of salvation from the mouths of the Ganges to Benares, and beyond the extremities of the Company's territories to the east, and that in most of these places he had seals to his ministry.

As a preacher, Krishna was truly evangelical in his views. He preached Christ, none but Christ, and Christ, the suffering, the atoning Saviour. He would often tell his countrymen how Justice and Mercy embraced each other in the undertaking of the Redeemer. He would contrast with wonderful effect, Christ washing the feet of his disciples, with the Hindoo spiritual guide,

having his foot on the disciple prostrate at his feet. He would dwell with delight on the divine properties of the Redeemer, proving from thence that he only was the true Gooroo, and would confirm these descriptions by reading to his heathen auditors the Redeemer's sermon on the mount. His method was mild and persuasive: and the sight was truly edifying to see this Hindoo convert in his simple native dress in the pulpit pleading with his countrymen and beseeching them to be reconciled to God.

As a private Christian, Krishna stood high among his brethren, as well as among Europeans, by all of whom he was recognized as an upright and truly sincere and amiable Christian.

In consequence of distresses in his family which had embittered many of his last days, Krishna was anxious to go and live in some quiet retreat, where he might speak of his Saviour, and end his days in peace. In the midst of these cogitations, on Wednesday, the 21st of August, in the forenoon, he was attacked by the fatal Cholera; and though his relations neglected too long to apply for medicine, yet at first the disorder appeared to give way to medical applications. The next day the medical gentleman residing at Serampore was called in by the missionaries; but he gave it as his decided opinion that the patient could not recover. Still Krishna lingered through the day, edifying all around him by his entire resignation; by the sweet tranquillity which illuminated his aged and languid countenance, and by the many refreshing words which he delivered respecting his own safety and blessedness in Christ. It appeared to be the feeling of all who visited him, "It is good to be here. Verily God is in this place. Let my last end be like Krishna's."

When asked about his attachment to Christ, he said, "Where can a sinner go, but unto Christ?" And when the same question in another form was put to him, he said, "Yes, but he loves me more than I love him." The same question was put a short time before he expired by one of the Missionaries when he nodded assent, and laid his hand on his heart, but was unable to speak.

The total absence of the fear of death was most conspicuous: when exhorted to take medicine, he objected

to it as unnecessary and fruitless. But being pressed, he yielded, still positively forbidding them to give him laudanum, (though generally considered as a necessary part of the prescriptions for this disorder) as it would produce insensibility, and put a period to those comforts which he then enjoyed. He begged that those who prayed for and with him would not pray for his recovery; and once or twice he asked if the grave had been prepared.

He appeared to have conquered all his worldly attachments, declaring that he did not wish to remain any longer in this thorny world; that his Saviour had sent his messenger for him, and he wished to go.

Although his mind was thus weaned from the world, and delivered from all anxiety respecting the future circumstances of his family, yet he was concerned for the salvation of his friends, and hence, when asked by an attendant if he was desirous of prayer, he seemed pleased with the proposal, and said, "Pray that I may be saved, and that all my family may be converted;" thus exhibiting the last anxieties of a Christian parent, and pouring out his last breath for the good of those whom God had given him in the flesh.

Nor was Krishna, in these his last moments, unmindful of the cause of Christ in Bengal. He declared to those around him, that all he had he had received from Christ; and that it was his desire that it should be given back to Christ, and devoted to the spread of his gospel. Poor man! he had nothing to leave except the Chapel he had built near his own dwelling; but the wish to make some return to the Redeemer proved that he was sensible that the Gospel, introduced to his attention by Dr. Thomas so many years ago, had done great things for him.

Such then was the religion of this Hindoo convert: summing it up, it amounts to this confession: "O Lord, I was once a poor stupid heathen. I worshipped dumb idols, and knew not but that these were the true God. To remove guilt from my conscience, I bathed in the Ganges, I worshipped my teacher (Gooroo) and licked the dust of his feet; I gave my property to the priests; I visited holy places; I repeated the name of my guardian deity. And lest these acts of religious service

should not prove sufficiently meritorious, I hoped for a son to perform those rights after my death which might deliver me from any difficulties into which my spirit might fall after leaving the body. Thus blind I lived, and thus deluded I should have died. But, blessed be thou, O Father of mercies, I heard the tidings of mercy through an atoning Mediator. These tidings led me to a knowledge of my spiritual state; and I found myself lying under a dreadful load of guilt. By faith, I fled to the Lord Jesus for refuge from the wrath to come; and the Saviour gave me peace and joy in believing. Now it is my joy to speak of him, to spread the knowledge of his death, and to communicate his unsearchable riches to my poor countrymen. I love my Saviour, though not as he loves me. I find his promise good, 'I will not leave you comfortless.' I have no fear in death. My only wishes are, that I and my family may be his; that all I have may be devoted to him; and that I may depart and be with Christ which is far better."

Do any doubt, whether Christianity be a good worth bestowing on the Hindoos? Let them look at this simple account which this converted heathen has given of himself; an account which flowed spontaneously from his own feelings, and in writing which he was wholly left to himself, and had no expectation of its publication. Look at heathen Krishna receiving his idolatrous teacher, washing his feet, and anointing his head with the dirty water, and look at the same man sitting with his Christian pastor, or delivering a sermon from the pulpit. Look at heathen Krishna, repeating an unmeaning incantation, or teaching it to others as a religious nostrum —and see him afterwards surrounded with a group of heathens, reading to them the Beatitudes. See heathen Krishna worshipping a wooden image of his lecherous name-sake, and then look at the same man worshipping the true God, and pouring out his heart in prayer in the midst of his Christian brethren. Look at heathen Krishna while he joins in the filthy songs and dances in honour of his idol, and then hear the same man lifting up his voice amongst a congregation of converted heathens, and singing in the Bengalee a hymn, written by himself, of which a free imitation is annexed. Look at heathen

Krishna overwhelmed with debt, and daily eluding his creditors, and then look at the same man punctually discharging all his engagements, and exhibiting through life the strongest contrast to the heathen in this respect. Look at the heathen by the sides of the Ganges, calling upon their dying relations to repeat the names of Narayun, of Gunga, of Ram, and of a whole rabble of gods, pouring the waters of this river down the throat of the dying, exposing them in the agonies of death to the chilling damps by night; and to the scorching beams of the sun by day; and listen to the cries of the dying, "Tell me not of works of merit; I have been committing nothing but sin. And now—where am I going?—What is there beyond this wretched existence? Am I going into some reptile or some animal body; or shall I at once plunge into some dreadful place of torment? I see the messenger of Yuma (the king of death) coming to seize me. Oh! save me—save me! O mother Gunga give me a place near to thee. Oh! Ram! Oh! Narayun! O my gooroo (his spiritual guide) how dark and heavy the cloud which envelopes me—is there no certainty, no ray of light from any of the shasters to guide and comfort me in my departure? Must I take the irrecoverable plunge, to be seen no more?"——And when they have seen and heard all this, let them look at the death of Krishna, the Christian, consoled by the addresses of his Christian brethren, by the hymns which they sing, by the words of the everlasting Gospel which they repeat; and let them listen to the pleasant words which proceed from his dying lips: "My Saviour has sent his messenger for me, and I wish to go to him,"—and then let them say, Whether the Gospel be a boon worth giving to the heathen.

Imitation of a hymn in Bengalee, by Krishna.

O Thou, my soul, forget no more,
The Friend who all thy mis'ry bore;
Let ev'ry idol be forgot,
But, O my soul, forget HIM not.

Bruhma for thee a body takes,
Thy guilt assumes, thy fetters breaks,
Discharging all thy dreadful debt;—
And canst thou e'er such love forget?

Renounce thy works and ways with grief,
And fly to this most sure relief;
Nor Him forget who left his throne,
And for thy life gave up his own.

Infinite truth and mercy shine
In Him, and he himself is thine;
And canst thou then, with sin beset,
Such charms, such matchless charms, forget?

Ah! no—till life itself depart,
His name shall cheer and warm my heart;
And, lisping this, from earth I'll rise,
And join the chorus of the skies.

Ah! no—when all things else expire,
And perish in the general fire,
This name all others shall survive,
And through eternity shall live.

JENNY SAUNDERS.

In one of the cottages attached to the Paper Mills, in Kennel Vale, lived Jenny Saunders; an industrious woman, whose manners were pleasing, and disposition cheerful. Her understanding was superior to the generality of those who move in so humble a station of life; yet all that poor Jenny thought or spoke of, or cared about, *for nearly forty years*, related merely to this world and the care of her little family; for her mind was entirely absorbed in providing for her husband and two children daily, and keeping her cottage in the order for which it was remarkable, but God was not in all her thoughts. Still, as her conduct was not immoral, in the common acceptation of the term, she had no difficulty to persuade herself that, as she was as good as her neighbours, through the mercy of heaven,

all would be well at last. Her health, however, began to fail; and it pleased the Lord, in his infinite goodness and mercy, to lead her by a way that she knew not, making "darkness light before her," in a manner that was surprising to herself and others. This change was effected through the means of a little messenger of mercy, in the form of a Religious Tract, which may be said to have travelled for that purpose, from Geneva; where it first appeared in a foreign language. Being translated and published by the Religious Tract Society, it was sent to a member of the Penrhyn Tract Society, who resided near poor Jenny's cottage, and was thus introduced to her notice: the striking account it gave of "Two Old Men," particularly the *latter of them*, by the divine blessing aroused her mind, so that she could muse on nothing; talk of nothing; and comparatively speaking, care for nothing, but what related to the salvation of her soul. Her anxious inquiries and deep solicitude were, after a time, relieved through the means of the kind and unremitting attention of her employer, by whose conversation and prayers her soul was strengthened. During her last illness she hardly wished to see any one else; she was, however, thankful for the visits of any Christian friends, and those who saw and conversed with her, were surprised to find how rapidly her knowledge in divine things increased; and they could not but witness, with singular pleasure, the ardour of her soul, and the lively confidence she had in God her Saviour. As she approached the confines of another world, she said to those around her dying bed, "I was travelling the downward road, and on the brink of endless misery; but, bless the Lord, He from His tender mercy and goodness, awakened me, and brought me out of darkness into marvellous light. I had great temptations when I first began to seek the Lord, but He enabled me to put my whole trust in Him, and so I was brought through the trial; and blessed be His great Name, He now beholds me in a better righteousness than my own,—the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. I would not, for ten thousand worlds, be found in my own righteousness. I have learned to believe in Christ, and how precious is the assurance I have! I shall never

perish—I have a glorious place in heaven prepared for me —a robe—a crown. I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I pray earnestly to the Lord to prepare my friends to follow me to glory."

These were some, and they are but a specimen, of the many holy and happy expressions that were uttered by this poor cottager, when flesh and heart failed her. She was sensible to her very last, and committing herself into the hands of Jesus, she sweetly fell asleep in him, July 27th, 1824. The following Lord's day her mortal remains were carried to the grave; a number of persons assembled to attend her funeral, and before the corpse was removed, an address was delivered to them, in front of the cottage, from Job xix. 25. The solemnity of the scene was great: as the bier moved slowly towards the parish church, at some distance, the vale resounded with hundreds of voices singing, as they moved forward, some verses of different hymns which poor Jenny had delighted to sing in her cottage on earth; and I have every reason to trust her spirit is now in the mansions of heaven, joining in nobler strains to her Redeemer's everlasting praise. T. W

THE BIBLE.

I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. In a few moments I shall pass into an unchangeable eternity. I want to know the way to heaven; God himself has condescended to teach me the way. For this very end he came down from heaven. He has written it down in a book. O give me that book! Give me the book of God at any price, that I may retire and read it in his presence alone. When I open this book to read it, that I may find the way to heaven, let me lift up my heart to the Father of lights, for the illuminating influences of His Holy Spirit. He only can explain the divine word to my understanding: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. ii. 14.)

№ 23

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE

CONTENTED VILLAGER;

Containing an interesting conversation between a Cottager and a Gentleman, who happened to call on her in his walk from London.

A GENTLEMAN in London, being in an ill state of health, was advised to walk out daily into the country. In one of his excursions, about five miles from town, he saw a small cottage at a little distance, and being weary. he made up to it, that he might rest himself. On entering the house, he found a poor woman, with four children, who were chiefly employed in spinning wick-yarn for candles. During his stay, the following conversation took place:

'Good woman, (said he,) your house, I observe, is sadly out of repair, I wonder how you do in the winter season. Surely you must be very uncomfortable?' 'It is but a poor place indeed, Sir, (said the woman,) but it is a mercy that it is no worse. It is better than we deserve; and we are under the same kind providence in the winter, as in the summer.' Surprised at this unexpected reply, he wished to lead her into a further explanation on the subject of religion. 'To what parish (said he) does your house belong?' She told him.—'And how far do you live from the village?'—'Three miles, Sir.'—'That is a long way for you to go to public worship, and I suppose you do go constantly?'—'I hope, Sir, we make conscience of worshipping God on a Sunday, and on other days.' 'I hope you do; but will you allow me to ask, what is it that inclines you to a practice which so many neglect?'—"I will tell you, Sir. About four years ago, I was visited with a heavy and dangerous affliction, and be-

ing apprehensive that if I died, I should perish for ever, I became very unhappy. I had such a sense of sin, and such apprehensions of the wrath of God, that I was a terror to myself, and to those about me. As my affliction increased, and the danger became more apparent, I was increasingly wretched; conceiving myself to be approaching the brink of hell, I cried to the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul, though I could scarcely entertain any hope of obtaining it. It was, however, my last resort, and all I could do. I told my husband and neighbours of my distress, but they could not understand my case; I was to them an object of wonder and pity. They tried to soothe and comfort me, by saying, 'You are a very honest and industrious woman, a quiet and peaceable neighbour, a good wife, and a good mother. God also is very merciful, and you are a penitent: if notwithstanding all this, you should go to hell, wo be to thousands.' But, alas! all they could say was of no use. I found they could not understand the state of my mind. Meanwhile my fever increased, and I was thought to be on the point of death. Several of my poor neighbours were about me, expecting every breath to be my last. 'She is just going!' said one of them. I could not speak, but was perfectly sensible, and heard those words: at which I thought, if I am going, I am going to hell. It pleased God, however, to spare me; and, I hope, it was in mercy. From this time the fever abated, and I gradually recovered. But my distress of mind did not abate. I considered that, though through the mercy of God I was spared a little while, yet I was still the same wretched vile and guilty creature: I needed mercy, but almost despaired of obtaining it. I used, at that time, to watch my heart, and pray in my poor manner; but could find no relief. Such was my unhappiness, that I had no heart to attend to the common concerns of my family. I again told my neighbours the state of my mind; but they knew not what to say, more than they had said, and I could not be easy. They then wished me to go to some minister.

"Soon after this, I felt inclined to take my neighbours' advice. I went to a minister, and told him the exercises of my mind from the beginning. He appeared to be much surprised, and said, he supposed I must have been guilty

of some great wickedness, and asked me what it was. I told him that I did not understand him. 'Why, (said he,) you must have committed theft, or drunkenness, or fraud, or been unfaithful to your husband, or done some other great sin.'—'No, Sir, (said I,) I desire to be thankful to God, I have been kept from all these outward evils; but do you not understand my meaning, sir? I am a vile sinner *in the sight of God;* my heart is full of evil. Every thing I do is sinful; I am a ruined, undone creature; I fear that I am going to hell!—and the thoughts of these things are terrible beyond what I can express.'—'Oh, poor woman, (replied he,) you must not give way to such thoughts as these: you will go out of your mind: you must endeavour to drive away such melancholy ideas. I would advise you to get into some cheerful company, and, if you can read, get some diverting books; and, by degrees, you will get the better of these gloomy apprehensions. You must strive against them, or you will not be able to perform the duties of your family.'—'Oh! Sir, (said I,) I cannot think your advice is right. Surely this would be adding sin to sin. It would be acting contrary to my conscience, and therefore would increase the weight of my distress, instead of removing it.'

"One Sunday, my husband and I, after having been at public worship in the forenoon, were setting by a ditch-side, eating our bread and cheese, I expressed my desire and determination to make religion more than ever the object of my anxious attention, and to increase my intimacy with pious people. 'That (said my husband) will be the way to be ruined indeed. We shall become the scorn of the neighbourhood, and my master, who has already looked at us with an evil eye, will be likely to turn me out of his service. Besides, you know that my lady makes presents at Christmas—she is now very kind to us, and we have more of her charity than some of our neighbours; but if she comes to know that we are going downright into the ways of those, whom she calls righteous over-much, we have nothing to expect from her.'

"'Alas! (said I,) all this is nothing to me. I am so distressed about my soul, that other things are of no account. If you will not countenance me, I will go in these ways by myself.' The next time we attended divine service,

my mind was more deeply affected than it had ever been before. I followed each confession of sin, particularly of heart sin; and each petition for mercy to poor sinners, through the merits and mediation of Christ, as the only ground of hope.—When the minister took his text I was all attention. It was the former part of the Parable of the Sower. He began by describing those hearers that are compared to the way-side. The ground was hard, and did not receive the seed; and partly through ignorance, inattention, and the influence of Satan on the mind, no good was produced. Next, he spoke of the stony ground hearers. On these, he observed, some effect was produced; but it was of short duration, and, at last, came to nothing. Then he came to speak of worldly-minded hearers, who also brought no fruit to perfection. I followed him all through his sermon, but it was an awful one to me. I thought it all belonged to me. I therefore went home with my mind more burdened than before. I saw that I was every thing that was vile and abominable, and could not help crying out—*Wo is me, for I am undone!*

"There was, however, one thought which afforded me some relief. I had, till now, considered my case as singular! for I had never met with any person who had the same views and feelings with myself; but now I perceived there was a person who understood the state of my mind. I reflected on the prayer, and on the sermon; and my mind was filled with thought. Understanding that the minister meant to preach upon the latter part of the parable the next Sunday, I longed for its return all the week, that I might hear it through, hoping also that he might be directed to say something which would afford relief to my afflicted soul. Well, the Sunday returned, and a delightful one it was to me! I was again greatly impressed and affected; and when the minister described the good ground, he showed that it was originally all wild and barren, but that it was made good by the influence of divine grace. It was broken up by convictions of sin, which, entering deeply into the soul of the sinner, caused him to see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to feel the plague of his own heart. Thus the spirit was made tender, and the mind teachable, and prepared for the reception of the

gospel.—Then he displayed the great truths of salvation, through Jesus Christ, and directed the hearers to him as the only saviour from sin, and the curse of the law to which they were exposed. He showed that pardon of sin, peace with God, justification and sanctification, all came freely to the chief of sinners, through the atonement and righteousness of Christ; and that these, being applied by the Spirit of God, were made effectual to their conversion, and, in the issue, were productive of good fruit in the present life, and in the life to come, of everlasting joy.

"Now was my heart filled with comfort—now I was led to see the way of escape—now a foundation was laid for my hope to rest upon;—I returned home with joy; and could now attend to my family concerns with cheerfulness.

"From this time I attended constantly with great delight: every Sunday was a feast day to me, and I have this additional comfort, that my husband also attends constantly and cheerfully with me; and I trust that he also is in good earnest. He now prays in his family, and we never lived so happily as we do now."

'I assure you, (replied the gentleman,) that your story is not a little interesting to me, and I hope you will persevere in your attendance on the gospel.'—"Yes, Sir, (said she,) I hope we shall; for surely I can say from experience, that 'wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'"

'Well, good woman, can you read?'—'Yes, sir, I can now read better than I could before.'—'And what good books have you got?'—'I have but one, Sir, and that is the Testament.'—'Let me look at it, if you please.'

'Dear Sir, I am ashamed to show it you; it is such a tattered piece: for before I knew the worth of it, I let my children play with it; but now I take it to public worship with me, and when the minister mentions a text that is in it, I turn to it, and read it.' Giving the book into his hand, she added, '*There is all St. John in it, Sir; and there is delightful reading in St. John.*'—'Yes, good woman, there is; and I am glad that you have tasted the sweetness of it. And can your children read?' 'Yes, Sir, my two oldest girls can read pretty well, for I send them once or twice a day to a neighbour, who is a better scholar than I, and she teaches them.'

After making the poor woman a present, to enable her to buy a new Bible, and a Testament for the children, the gentleman took leave of them.

AFFECTING

FAMILY SCENE.

The following interesting and affecting incident, is extracted from an account of a revival of religion in Vassalborough, Me.

It was in a wealthy and respectable family, whose kindness were lavished upon the ministers of the Gospel, as well as other guests, that two or three friends of us tarried one night of this very week. Not a member of the family professed religion, or cherished religious hope—though the externals of the Gospel wanted not their support; but the savour of prayer was somewhere in the ancestry line. At evening we bowed before God, previous to retiring to rest, having spent most of the time in religious conversation; each guest seeking to persuade some member of the family to embrace the Redeemer. Something laboured in the minds of one or two of the family, though there was still no hope entertained. Next morning, after the table was cleared, we assembled for prayer; we knelt down before God, and carried the spiritual and eternal interests of the family to the Throne of Grace. When the prayer was concluded, and we were about to rise, we suddenly heard a voice, apparently in the direction of the door, earnestly commencing another prayer, in which, without for some time knowing whose it was, we heartily joined. It was the deacon, who was passing by, and who felt as if, now the Lord was with us, he must put in a fresh petition for the dear family; and accordingly he had come in unheard, and softly kneeling by the side of us, had let his feelings burst forth, when a moment of silence had returned. This season of devotion will long be remembered by one of the family, a son, whose high hopes and brilliant prospects for this life had, till this memorable morning, absorbed his attention and solicitude. An arrow, shot by the hand of the Spirit, trembled in his heart

—he paused—thought, and stood convicted. Conflicting feelings rent his bosom. He saw himself to be a miserable sinner—condemned of God. This world presented no source of relief. He walked about—he paced his room, agitated and distressed, but saw not by faith, Him who tenderly calls, *Look unto* ME, *and be saved.* Taking up, at the house of a friend, the Bible, his troubled eye rested upon the passage, *Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.* His heart broke—he humbled himself—he felt that it was the point of the Spirit's sword, which had drawn the waters of penitence from his obdurate heart. I humble myself, O God, before thee. I cast myself down at the foot of the cross, to receive thy mercy. I joyfully embrace the crucified Saviour. Thus felt he. It was no dream. "It is true," said he—his lips quivered with fear and rapture—"time can alone determine the reality of my hope, but I certainly have one." His joy somehow seemed to cast such a dazzling radiance over the present, the future, and even the past, that, for a time, his very transgressions were lost in the blaze of glory.

We assembled in this family, after this happy change in one of its leading members, for evening prayers; and my young friend being requested to lead the devotions, he declined—his hope, he thought, was too recent—he knew not how to pray aright. But as we were desirous that one of the family might, for the first time since its existence, pray to God in behalf and in presence of the family, he consented. Various earnest petitions were offered up; but when he came to his father and mother—his beloved father and mother, who had not named Christ—after pouring out a flood of tears, and feeling the rush of another torrent of affection, he could go no further. There was a pause, as touching to the soul as the silent awful presence of the eternal God could make it. Language became dumb at the immensity of the petition preferred by the child, yearning over the immortal interests of the parent. He could not proceed; and one of us took up his petition, and continued to entreat mercy of God. When we arose from our knees, he went directly to his mother, laid his head in her lap, and gave vent to his struggling feelings, imploring her in the most impassion-

ed manner to come to Christ. "*O mother, mother, come to Christ. Come, my dear mother, to Christ,*" said he, "*you will find him so precious!*"

If any thing can go to the heart, it is such a scene as this. Who could help weeping to see a child urging into the path to heaven a parent, who had given him birth, but long before his birth had been an accountable and gospel called creature,—upon whose bosom he had reclined in the fragile years of infancy,—who had cherished many a tender affection towards him;—but among all these affections felt not that which has for its object the undying soul, and waited many a long year to receive and obey a warning from her own offspring! I bless God again, it was not given in vain. The appeal from such a source was irresistible. The Lord seemed to smile on the tender anxieties of the son; the mother was obliged to yield; and in a short time there was a new affection between them. They loved each other now, because they both loved God. Seven members of this family expressed hope of a change during the week.

CHRIST TO BE PREFERRED ABOVE ALL.

My life is sweet, but Christ must be sweeter than life; my soul is precious, but Christ must be dearer to me than my soul; my salvation is much, but Christ must be more to me than my salvation. As it is a sign of a carnal love, to follow Christ for the loaves; so it is a sign of a base mercenary love, to seek Christ for a reward; that it is but an adulterate affection, that affects the present more than the party—loves the ring more than her beloved; that choice cannot be cordial, that aims only at a portion; that love cannot be real, that aims only at a benefit. Lord, thou art amiable in thyself; oh, that I could love thee for thyself.

☞ Tracts may be obtained on application to the Agent.

No. 24

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

EFFICACY OF THE SCRIPTURES,

Exemplified in the Conversion and Death of a Mulatto Female.

EARLY on a Sabbath morning, a stranger came to my house. It was a mulatto woman, about twenty years of age. She was married to a man of her own colour, whose master, at his death, emancipated him, and bequeathed to him a small farm, on which they were living, about thirty miles from the city of Washington, in a neighbourhood where the pure gospel of Christ was unknown, and where no Christian society existed. She had learned to read, (an attainment not common among persons of her description;) and having a Testament in her house, though mutilated and defaced with age, her leisure moments had been employed in its perusal. Amusement first prompted her to this exercise; and the want of another book, was the cause of her using this sacred volume: but God soon made her feel its value. She read her character there; and through this, and no other instrumentality, was brought under deep conviction of guilt. That word which gave her the knowledge of her lost estate, directed her also to the remedy. With this book for her constant companion, after passing some weeks in the agony of grief for sin, and earnest cries to the Lord Jesus for deliverance, she was brought to enjoy the consolation of that promise, "*Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.*" Emancipated from the bondage of sin, and drawn by the affection of a child, her inquiry now was, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* The answer reverberated, *Repent and be baptized.* Penitence she felt; and having no guide but the Testa-

ment, she thought of no way to be baptized, but to go as her Lord did to John at Jordan, to one who would bury her with Christ in baptism. She therefore prevailed on her kind husband to accompany her to this city for that purpose. They had set out, on Saturday evening, in a small farm cart; and having travelled through the night, she now presented herself in the character of a penitent, believing on Jesus Christ for salvation, and desired baptism. The recital of her artless tale bespoke the sincerity of her heart; and when with tears of gratitude she craved the honour of following that precious Saviour who had redeemed her from death, and so recently revealed his love to her soul, I could no longer hesitate. She was that day baptized. The following morning she called to take her leave. After exhorting her to watchfulness and prayer, and presenting her with a Bible, which she had never read, and never before possessed, she departed for her own house; and, like her ancient kinsman, went on her way rejoicing.

For several weeks I heard no more of her; till one morning her husband met me, and informed me she was dead; that she had left a request for me to visit her neighbours, and preach a funeral sermon; and he had now come to bear to me her request. It was observed. Arriving at the cottage where she had resided, which stood on a sequestered plain surrounded with forests, far removed from all the scenes and turmoils which agitate a busy world, I was pleased to observe that the common duties of life had not been neglected. Every thing about the house was neat and clean; no disorder or confusion; but all indicated that the apostolic injunction, *guide the ways of her house*, had been duly regarded. My inquiry was naturally directed to the manner of her life and death; the relation of which was deeply interesting. From the time of her return after baptism, she had made the Bible, which I had presented her, the only subject of her perusal and conversation. It was her uniform custom to rise early in the morning, and perform, with industrious care, the business of her house. This was commonly accomplished before the meridian of the day; after which she always seated herself under a tree that shaded her cottage, and employed the whole of her remaining

time in reading this sacred book. It shed a continual lustre upon her soul, which was reflected upon all around her, in that heavenly mindedness which it produced. Thus passed away in undisturbed tranquillity, the few weeks allotted to her on earth. She was ripening for glory; and this peaceful retreat, sacred to devotion while she lived, was in all respects favourable to her exercises. But the scene was soon to close. She was sick but two days before she expired. A violent fever seized suddenly upon her; and from its commencement she anticipated its consequence. When the disease began its ravages, she leaned upon her companion, and with a placid smile said, "Charles, I have a better husband than you, and am now going to him." Charles, who did not at first apprehend her meaning, not anticipating any danger from her complaint, inquired, with apparent surprise, what she meant. "Don't be jealous, Charles," said she, "it is Jesus Christ of whom I speak. He is more to me than all this world. He has redeemed me from ruin, and is now about taking me to himself. You must not complain, though I am willing to part with you, and all my earthly comforts, to be with him." She then reclined upon her bed, to rise no more in this life. But while able to use it, she could not part with her Bible. Calling for it upon her bed, she read it there till her strength so failed that she could no longer continue; then, laying it under her head, she fell into a transient slumber. On waking, she took the Bible from her pillow, and attempted to read; but nature was too far exhausted. "I shall never read this book again," said she; first clasping it to her bosom, then kissing it, she gave it to her mother, who attended her, saying, "Take this book, and let it never be abused. It has been the consolation of my soul in health, and is my support in death. If it were my Father's pleasure, I should rejoice to see the members of that church who received me as a fellow pilgrim. They are in my heart, and I shall spend an eternity with them. Give my love to Mr. ———, and tell him that I shall see him in heaven. The Bible which he gave me has been my comfort and guide; request him to recommend it to others." Then giving her last advice to her relatives and friends who surrounded her dying bed, and employing her last

accents in thanksgivings to God, with the full assurance of hope, and in all the triumphs of faith, she fell asleep in Christ.

This volume of inspiration, which bore her fearlessly through the shade of death, is the gift of God to man; and on her it was bestowed, through the munificence of a Bible Society. It has imparted a blessing in this single instance, infinitely more than sufficient to balance the account of all the monies contributed to the cause of Bible Societies throughout America, or the world.

"With my substance I will honour
My Redeemer and my Lord;
Were ten thousand worlds my manor,
All were nothing to his word."

CHRISTIAN COURAGE.

Worldling, thou deridest to see a Christian melting at the word, trembling at a sin; I tell thee, he is of a noble courage, he can triumph in death, and in judgment; it is not the king of fears that can appal him, or hell itself that can affright him; but as a conqueror over both, he can leave the world with a smile:

O! death, where is thy sting?
O! grave, where is thy victory?

That is his triumphant valediction and farewell. But thou that gloriest so much, because thou canst silence conscience, and outface sin, I tell thee, thou art of a base cowardly spirit; let but a little sickness impair thy health, or the thoughts of death charge upon thy spirit, and what quick retreatings are there from thy bold resolutions? What heaviness clouds thy looks? What terrors shake thy joints? What sadness sinks thy heart? So that a fancy frights thee, a shadow starts thee. Nabal like, thy spirits die, and sink within thee like a stone. Therefore jeer on; for my part, I hold it better to fear while God threatens, than to fall when God judgeth.

☞Tracts may be obtained on application to the Agent.

No. 25

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE

INFIDEL CONVINCED BY A CHILD.

[*Written by the Rev. C. Malan, a French Clergyman.*]

Early in the year 1818, I left Geneva for Paris. From Macon to Chalons I travelled by the passage boat, on the river Soane: it was a wet day, and the passengers were obliged to stay in the cabin. After some time it was proposed that one of the company should read aloud, to pass away the time.

A person of respectable appearance, who sat near me, produced two volumes from his travelling bag, saying, "Here is something that will amuse us; I will read if you will listen."

"What book is it?" said I, to this obliging gentleman.

He read the title; it was one of those infidel works with which worthless men inundated France, during the reign of irreligion that so long desolated that country.

"I do not think you will read *that* book," said I.

"Why not," answered he sharply.

"Because, Sir, I am going to read *this*."

"And pray what book have *you* got?"

"It is the Bible, Sir; before which your book must remain closed, or at least be read in silence."

Our companions all approved my words. The infidel replied angrily, "Well, Sir, if my book must not be read, yours also must be silent."

"It has spoken *already*," said I, "and it will speak long after we are laid in the silent grave. But, if you

choose, read that book, which leads you astray; and I will read this, which points out the way of happiness."

I then seated myself in a corner, and read, with renewed pleasure, the promises and instructions of the word of God: I did so without interruption, except by occasional sneers from the unhappy infidel and two others, who like him, delighted in vanity and lies. They glanced at me, and appeared to say, "Who cares for you or your Bible?"

Towards evening we left the boat, and on seating myself in the diligence, I found that my fellow passengers were the infidel whose book I had condemned, two merchants from Picardy, and a colonel in the army; they all were proceeding to Paris as well as myself. After the usual salutations and a few common-place observations, somebody asked "Where shall we be at this time to-morrow?" "At such a place," answered one of the merchants. I added, "If God pleases."

"Ah, as for that," exclaimed the infidel, "we shall be there just the same, whether he pleases or not."

"Then you consider the will of God as nothing," said I, fixing my eyes upon his, till he turned them away; "and you dare to utter such a sentiment in his presence?"

"Why, as for that," said he, with a bitter smile of contempt, "you must prove that there is a God before you talk about his will."

This horrible blasphemy caused the whole party to shudder as if a viper or some other poisonous reptile had been thrown into the coach. The merchant who sat next the infidel, shrank from him as if by instinct, while the colonel looked at me, saying, "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God." I then addressed the infidel, and said to him, "If I had been aware that you would have uttered such sentiments, I would not have entered the coach. But the Almighty God has heard your blasphemy, and is able to convince you of his power."

"That is my concern," said he; "every one is free to believe as he pleases; you keep your belief, and I will hold mine."

"Do you suppose, Sir," said the colonel, "that be-

cause you have swallowed poison we can let you perish, without caring for you? No; we have more regard for your best interests; and although we have shuddered at your blasphemy, we think it our duty to endeavour to save you from its awful consequences."

The Infidel. Well, fools, if they like, may suppose——

The Colonel. Stop, Sir, you had better be silent. You are beside yourself; and, for my part, I assure you that I do not consider myself a fool because I firmly, and with reverence, believe that the Almighty God, who has created and redeemed me, will uphold and protect me every hour through all the changing scenes of this mortal life. And (added he, with fervour,) a soldier in particular ought to feel that there is a God. It is a truth indelibly impressed upon every object around us; nay, even upon the countenance of the madman who denies it.

The Infidel. (*angrily.*) The madman! Sir, that is too much.——

The Colonel. Stop; do not distress yourself, Sir; nor suppose that I mean to back my opinions with my sword. No; I only repeated what the Bible declares upon the opinion you just now asserted. For myself, I should be worse than a madman if I did not believe that it was my Almighty and Heavenly Father who has, for many a year, guarded me in the day of battle. Only a few months ago a rocket struck the body of my horse and instantly exploded; it tore him to pieces, and I was thrown to some distance without receiving the smallest injury. Sir, tell me not of chance, but say, who was it that preserved me in the hour of danger and death?

The infidel stammered out a few words. The colonel added some brief observations, and we then wished each other good night.

In the morning, the colonel gave me a hint to resume the subject of the preceding day. I sat opposite the infidel, who was still asleep, but exhibited no traces of inward peace upon his countenance. I took out my Bible and read aloud some of the Psalms, and soon perceived that the sleeper was awakened, although he pretended to sleep on; for, as I said in the 10th Psalm, "The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek after

God, God is not in all his thoughts;" a sudden frown passed across his brow, which the colonel and the two merchants noticed as well as myself.

Just then the coach stopped at the bottom of a steep ascent. It was a frosty morning, and a few flakes of snow had fallen. While we waited to rest the horses, the door of a cottage by the road side opened, and three children came out. The eldest was a girl about twelve years old, another girl between six and seven, and a smiling chubby-faced boy about four, followed her.

The eldest held a long hazel wand, at the end of which was fixed a nosegay of winter flowers, neatly tied up, to the window of the coach.

I was pleased with this little mark of industry, and putting sixpence into a cleft at the end of the wand, I took the nosegay.

"A happy New-Year to the gentleman," cried the children. "Well," said I, "I suppose I must give you something for your good wishes," and I threw them another sixpence.

The children exclaimed, "A happy New-Year, Sir; may you live many happy years."

"How many?" said I.—"O, a great many, Sir; as many as you can."

"Thank you, my dear; but how many years do you suppose I shall live in this world?"

"Ah, Sir, how can *I* tell!" said the girl. "Who *can* tell?" asked I.

This question appeared to puzzle her: our conversation attracted the attention of my fellow travellers, even of the infidel; while the driver and the guard also seemed to listen; but no one replied.

I repeated, "Who can tell how many years longer I shall live?"

The two sisters said nothing, but the little boy, clasping his hands together, looked up at me, and said, "Sir, nobody but God knows that."

The coach went on; and, after a short silence, the colonel repeated the verse, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." (Ps. viii. 2.)

"Yes," said I, "a little child, who has only just entered into life, already knows in his heart, and testifies with his lips, that there is a God who knows all things; while a man who has lived thirty or forty years, experienced many striking proofs of the power, and wisdom, and kind providence of God, opposes these truths, and would command the child to be silent; nay, perhaps, is ready to make a jest of his words."

The infidel sat without speaking, and with downcast looks, he appeared to feel our last words; I said no more, not wishing to excite his anger, but desirous that he should reflect upon what had passed.

We continued silent for some time, at length he, who the day before had laughed at the Bible, and had dared to deny that there was a God, said, in an humble tone of voice, "Sir, last night you told the colonel, that you would read to him some passages from the Bible; these gentlemen and I would be glad to hear you."

The colonel looked at me with pleasure, the tears stood in his eyes; I could not restrain my emotion, but said, "Is it possible that God should have caused you to listen to his voice, from the mouth of that little child?" "What the child said certainly made a singular impression on me," replied he. "I will confess, that, during the last hour, I have felt differently upon this subject from what I have ever done before; but, Sir, I do not wish to recall what passed yesterday evening; I entreat that you also will try to forget it."

The colonel turned towards him, and took his hand, saying, "We deeply rejoice to hear what you have just said. It is of God, and it is, I trust, the beginning of the work of the Holy Spirit in your heart." "Read to us, Sir," added he, addressing himself to me, "read to us the word of life; and may God bless it to all our hearts."

The morning was spent in this pleasant employment, and we were much gratified by the earnest inquiries of our companion. Several times he appeared struck to the heart, by that word which the Holy Spirit has compared to "a two edged sword." (Heb. iv. 12.) At other times he brought forward objections, which were easily removed by the word of truth. I need not at-

tempt to express how much we rejoiced at having reason to hope that God had touched that heart, which but a few hours before was in open rebellion against him.

Our conversation continued until we stopped to dine at a late hour. We were cold and hungry, and rejoiced as much at the sight of the fire, as to see the provisions upon the table. Our companion appeared more at his ease, and before we sat down to table, I asked a blessing upon the food provided for us. Our conversation was gratifying; the colonel spoke of his childhood, and the religious education he had received. "My mother," said he, "was to me what Monicia was to St. Augustine; scarcely a day passed without her hearing me read the Bible, and instructing me in the truths of the gospel. When twelve years old, I was brought to the knowledge of the Saviour and since that time I have known peace and joy in believing. If I have been enabled to behave with courage in the field, it has been because, having trust in the Lord, I feared not death nor danger. When marching to battle, I felt that the eyes of the Lord were upon me; I was enabled to commit my soul into his hands, who redeemed me with his precious blood; and I entreated him to keep me in the path of duty. Each succeeding day, I have had new causes to bless my God and Saviour."

This pious soldier related to us some further particulars of his life. Our companion listened with attention, and more than once referred to what had passed in the boat and in the coach, and especially to the children of the cottage. This gave the colonel and myself an opportunity to observe that God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. (1 Cor. i. 27.)

"It is true," said our companion. "Yes. I feel that it is true: for I must confess, that when you asked the girl that question, I guessed the answer which you wished her to give, and I resolved to ridicule it; but when she did not reply, and after a long pause, the little boy so simply declared the name of God, it struck me to the heart, and I had not a word to say; I could almost suppose that his eyes were upon me; I shall never forget that moment; I was struck dumb."

He then rose from the table, and left the room, but soon returned with the two volumes which he had offered to read while we were in the boat.

"Here, Sir," said he, "are the vile books, which for several years past have strengthened me in unbelief and blasphemy. May God, who now beholds me, and in whose presence I now stand, consume the evils that they have nourished within my heart, as this fire consumes their wretched pages, and the blasphemies they contain."

He cast the volumes into the fire, and looked on in silence till they were burnt to ashes. "Now," said he, "I am relieved of part of my burden; those volumes can do no more harm; and may my right hand be cut off, rather than I be permitted again to open others like them. May God," added he, pointing to my Bible; "May God teach me, and write upon my heart, the truths contained in that precious book, which has this day shed a ray of light into my soul."

"We all added a fervent Amen."

We were but the fellow travellers of a day. What the event might be has not come to my knowledge; but surely we may hope that he who sowed the good seed would cause it to grow, and in his infinite mercy complete the work which he thus began.

Mr. Flavel being in London in 1673, his old bookseller, Mr. Boulter, gave him the following relation, viz: "that some time before, there came into his shop, a sparkish gentleman, to inquire for some play books; Mr. Boulter told him he had none; but showed him Mr. Flavel's little treatise of "Keeping the Heart," entreated him to read it, and assured him it would do him more good than play books. The gentleman read the title, and, glancing upon several pages here and there, broke out into these and such other expressions—"what a fanatic was he who made this book!" Mr. Boulter begged of him to buy and read it, and told him, "he had no cause to

censure it so bitterly." At last he bought it, but told him he would not read it. "What will you do with it, then?" said Mr. Boulter. "I will tear and burn it." said he, "and send it to the devil." Mr. Boulter told him "he should not have it." Upon this the gentleman promised to read it; and Mr. Boulter told him, "if he disliked it, upon reading, he would return him his money." About a month after, the gentleman came to the shop again in a very modest habit, and with a serious countenance addressed Mr. Boulter thus: "Sir, I most heartily thank you for putting this book into my hands—I bless God that moved you to do it—it hath saved my soul—blessed be God that I ever came into your shop." And then he bought an hundred more of those books of him, and told him "he would give them to the poor, who could not buy them."

Doctor Staunton was called the searching preacher. Preaching once at Warborough, near Oxford, a man was so much affected with his first prayer, that he ran home, and desired his wife to get ready and come to church, for there was one in the pulpit who prayed like an angel. The woman hastened away, and heard the sermon, which, under the divine blessing, proved the means of her conversion, and she afterwards proved an eminent Christian!

THE END.

☞ Tracts may be obtained on application to the Agent.

No. 26

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

TERMS OF COMMUNION.

[*Circular Letter of the Hudson River Association*, 1824.]

Dearly Beloved Brethren,—In accordance with a resolution passed at our last annual meeting, "THE TERMS OF COMMUNION," will claim your attention, as the subject of our present circular address. It is to be regretted that the signs of the times should ever indicate the expediency of presenting *this subject* to your consideration, *in a controversial shape*; but since necessity is laid upon us, we desire to enter upon its investigation with all that alacrity which the love of revealed truth, and supreme regard for Zion's King, and unyielding attachment to the order of his house, are calculated to inspire.

The phrase "communion," or "fellowship," is used in different senses in the sacred writings. It frequently denotes that holy enjoyment of the divine presence, and that soul-comforting participation of the Redeemer's fulness, which it is the privilege of believers to realize. The saints are joined to the Lord *by one Spirit; they draw water out of the wells of salvation; God is their dwelling-place in all generations*; and it is therefore said, *truly their fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ*. This fellowship does not necessarily stand connected with church government or relationship; it is neither confined to time nor place, nor does it bend to the control of earthly circumstances. It is felt by Jacob with a stone for his pillow; it drives away the fears and pains of the thief upon the cross; it cheers the hearts of Paul and Silas, though beaten with many stripes and thrust into the inner prison; and it converts the desolate Isle of Patmos into a paradise of heavenly rapture. The

terms of this communion, all centre in the rich and distinguishing grace of God.

The expression is sometimes used in a large and comprehensive sense, to describe that fraternal affection and spiritual intercourse, which all those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity and truth, may righteously maintain with each other. Individuals attached to the different denominations of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Quakers, &c. *may have good reason* to entertain a favourable opinion of each other's Christian exercises; they may unite their efforts to multiply and distribute copies of the Bible, and send the gospel of salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth; they may take sweet counsel together, and be mutual helpers of each others' joy; and their communion will be proportioned to the evidence which the parties furnish, of maintaining a close walk with God. *If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.* But as *this fellowship in the Gospel* is enjoyed by individual believers who never unite with a particular church; as it exists in different degrees, according to the strength of their confidence that God has begun a good work in the heart, without any reference to the ordinances or regulations of his house, it is an entirely different thing from *church fellowship*, and is by no means to be confounded therewith.

In modern phraseology the word "*Communion*," is employed, by common consent, as expressive of that fellowship which experimental Christians have with the Saviour of sinners, and with one another, in the ordinance of the Lord's supper; and this use of the phrase seems to be justified by the Apostle's language, 1 Cor. x. 16, *The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?* The single point, therefore, which we have now before us is, to answer the inquiry, *What are the indispensable terms of this communion?* or, in other words, what prerequisites of admission to the Lord's supper are marked out, in the New Testament, for the observance of the churches of Christ to the end of the world? To this inquiry we reply, *regeneration, baptism, and a conversation*

such as becometh the Gospel of Christ; and in proof of the correctness of this reply, we appeal to the law and to the testimony.

The children of God are bound to give thanks always to their Heavenly Father, because he hath from the beginning chosen them to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, *whereunto they are called by the Gospel;* and THEN, *as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ;* and to manifest their attachment to the *laws, doctrines,* and *ordinances,* once delivered to the saints. The primitive churches, constituted under the immediate direction of the inspired apostles, were composed of self-condemned sinners, who were by nature children of wrath even as others; but being pricked in their hearts and quickened by the Spirit of God, fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the Gospel. They believed the testimony given of God's dear Son, and having gladly received the truth, *were baptized both men and women.* To the first Gospel church in Jerusalem it is said, *the Lord added daily such as should be saved, and they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* The church at Corinth consisted of those who were *sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, and who called upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.* The members of the church at Colosse, had *put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:* and the brethren at Rome, were *the called of Jesus Christ, beloved of God, called to be saints.* Now if these apostolic churches were erected upon correct principles, (and who so contumacious or schismatic as to deny it?) they are certainly to us infallible guides, and present us with a perfect pattern. If *they* received only such as professed to be born of God, and gave evidence that they were begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, *we* should imitate their example; *and if there come any unto us and bring not this doctrine,* we are commanded *not to receive him into our house, neither bid him God speed;* for he that biddeth him God speed; that

is, he that welcometh to the privileges of the church, *him that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, is partaker of his evil deeds.* It is therefore an established principle in Baptist churches to require of all candidates for admission, a declaration of what God hath done for their souls; and when satisfactory evidence of a *change of heart* is exhibited, the *first scriptural term of communion*, is elicited by the church. Should this fundamental principle ever be abandoned, we hesitate not to say, the fine gold will become dim, the glory will depart from us, and the vengeance of Him who walketh in the midst of the golden candlesticks may be justly apprehended.

That *Baptism* is a "*Term of Communion,*" is manifest from the *design* and *order* of that ordinance, as well as from the uniform practice of the apostles.

It is the *design of Baptism*, among other important particulars, to exhibit the existence of a new relationship, and to declare to all around, the interesting fact, that the individual baptized has come out from the world, and enlisted under the banner of Christ. In this view of the subject, it is not merely the answer of a good conscience towards God, but it is also a grateful and public recognition of that grand line of distinction which the Redeemer has established between the *kingdom of darkness*, and that *kingdom which is not of this world. For as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.* Gal. iii. 27. *Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.* Rom. vi. 4. As it is evident that a man must enter into the kingdom, before he can be entitled to the immunities of a subject; that he must be received into the fellowship of a particular church, before he can enjoy the privileges of that church; even so, it is equally plain, that *Baptism*, upon profession of faith in the Messiah, must remain an *indispensable term of communion*, until it can be proved that *unbaptized persons* were added to the churches planted by the apostles in different parts of the world. And this will appear yet more abundantly if we consider,—

The order which is uniformly observed in the New

Testament, with reference to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. When the Great Head of the church sent forth his ministering servants to build up his kingdom in our ruined world, he gave them commission in the following words :—*Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost,—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* This language is lucid and definite. It directed them *first* to teach, or, as it is elsewhere expressed, *to preach the Gospel to every creature.* When the word preached was accompanied by an unction from the Holy One, men were made wise unto salvation; they were effectually taught; *they were made disciples;* and then, *and not till then*, were the apostles commanded to baptize them. *After this*, they were to instruct them to observe all things enjoined upon them by the Saviour; and among *the all things*, who dare deny to the Lord's supper a place? Since the Redeemer has sufficient wisdom to devise the most suitable ordinances, either for the comfort of his people, or as a test of their obedience; and since all power is given him to make laws in Zion, and fix *the order of their observance;* to his *authority* all Christians should certainly submit. But it is plain that *baptism must precede the communion*, not only because the Lord Christ hath so decreed, but because *this order* is necessary in the very nature of things, if there be an adaptation of the sign to the thing signified. We must first be made alive, before we need bread to sustain life; and in like manner, *the ordinance* which shadows forth *the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost*, must of necessity, go before *that* which holds out to us in a figure the *bread which came down from heaven*, whereof if a man eat, he shall live for ever. That this statement is correct, we most assuredly gather from the unvarying *practice* of the Apostles themselves.

The preaching of Peter, upon a certain notable occasion, produced such an astonishing effect that thousands cried out, *Men and brethren what shall we do to be saved?* The preacher promptly replies, *Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.* What follows? *They that gladly received the word* WERE BAP-

TIZED. After baptism they were added to the church in Jerusalem, *and then*, participated in the communion, or *the breaking of bread.*

The conduct of Paul was precisely similar to that of his brother Peter. He came to Corinth, and taught the word of God among its inhabitants. *Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized.* These baptized believers were then constituted into a gospel church, and kept the ordinance of the Lord's Supper *as delivered to them by the Apostle.* Acts xviii. 1 Cor. ii. 2. If therefore, the *uniform practice* of the Apostles justly challenges our imitation, we must inviolably adhere to the *order* which they have established.

The last term of church communion we have named, is a *godly walk and conversation;* and this position is easily maintained, both upon the principles of reason and revelation. The children of *God are holy brethren: a royal priesthood—a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* This description of them is given by one who cannot err; and it would certainly be incongruous and unnatural for such persons to be *unequally yoked together with unbelievers. How can two walk together except they be agreed? What communion hath light with darkness, and what fellowship hath Christ with Belial?* are questions which need no comment;—they answer themselves. In extending the right hand of fellowship, therefore, a church must be satisfied that the individual soliciting admission has scriptural views of himself, and of God, and of the way of salvation by Christ alone, and of the work of the Spirit, and of the holy tendency of divine truth; and hence we are directed *to mark and avoid those* whose erroneous sentiments cause divisions and offences contrary to the *doctrine which we have learned.* Rom. xvi. Moreover the candidate for church communion must not only *converse* about the things of God in a proper manner, but his *deportment* must correspond with his holy profession. *If any man that is called a brother, be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner, we must not keep company with such an one, no not to eat.* 1 Cor. v. 11. and *that course of conduct* which cuts off from the church one who is already a member, must be, by parity of

reasoning, an insurmountable obstacle against admission to its privileges.

Our sentiments with reference to the terms of communion, have, in different ages and countries, occasioned the opprobrious epithets of "bigoted, uncharitable, self-righteous," &c. to be heaped upon us with an unsparing hand; but these are weak and powerless weapons when employed against those who are armed with the sword of the Spirit, *in defence of a divine institution.* We shall close this epistle by replying briefly to some of the most plausible objections which are constantly urged against the sentiments we have advanced.

First objection. "*You lay too much stress upon baptism by making it an indispensable term of communion.*

To this we reply;—We pay no greater regard to it, nor do we give it a higher place in our system, than the Lord Christ hath enjoined, or the Apostles and primitive Christians, by *their example*, have warranted. And here we may ask, *why should more stress be laid upon the Lord's supper than upon baptism;* and why should many professing Christians so earnestly advocate the observance of the former, while they pervert, or entirely neglect the latter? Were not both ordinances instituted by the same Lord, and do they not, therefore, come to us clothed with the same authority? We know that Pædobaptists are in the habit of calling baptism a *non-essential; an external rite; a mere ceremony;* &c. If this be true, we would inquire, what more is the supper? *Is it a Saviour?* But if these sacred institutions, be indeed, *as we believe*, signs of important and essential truths, baptism is unquestionably as significative as the breaking of bread, and exhibits, *emblematically*, a large proportion of the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel. Upon an investigation of the New Testament, we find that baptism, of the two, is much the more frequently mentioned, and baptized believers are affectionately and repeatedly exhorted, *so to walk* in Christ Jesus their Lord, as in *that ordinance they have put him on.* Taking then the Holy Book as our only and all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, we have the highest authority for saying, We give to baptism, which Christ appointed as the first gospel institute, as a test of his children's obe-

dience, and a lively emblem of their renewal by the Holy Ghost, *exactly the situation* which the master of the house has designated; and with a *thus saith the Lord* sounding in our ears and penetrating our hearts, it is not possible that we should listen to the doctrines or commandments of men.

A second objection, charges us with causing *a separation between the children of the same Heavenly Father.*

Suppose we grant that baptism is an insuperable barrier in the way of our communing, *in church capacity*, with unbaptized persons; does it necessarily result from this concession, *that the blame* righteously attaches itself to the skirts of our garments? Shall those who understand and keep the ordinances, in their nature, order, and design, as they were originally delivered to the churches, *be condemned?* and those who depart from them, and embrace a "figment of their own imagination," *be justified? God forbid!* We hesitate not to say, most explicitly, that baptism is a *separating line*, but it is one of the Lord's own making, and we endeavour constantly, both by preaching and example, to enlighten the minds of our Pædobaptist friends on the subject. We warn them of their errors; we hold up to them the truth; we point them definitely to chapter and verse; and we exhort every believer among them, quite as often as they wish to hear us, *to arise and be baptized and wash away their sins*, (in a figure,) *calling upon the name of the Lord.*—We are honest and sincere in these declarations, and in making them thus plainly, it must be evident to the candid and judicious, that we cannot have any *by-ends, or measures of mere expediency* to promote. We wish the truth, and the truth alone as it is in Jesus, every where to prevail; and we are grieved in heart, that those whom we respect and love on so many other accounts, should, in this particular, persist in treading the pathway of disobedience, boldly *rejecting the counsel of God* in not being baptized according to his commandment. If our veracity and Christian affection, touching this whole matter, be unjustly called in question, we are permitted to adopt the language of a Baptist, and say: *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with*

fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, and more abundantly to you-ward. 2 *Cor.* i. 12.

A third objection states, that it is *the Lord's table, and therefore we have no right to hinder those who wish to approach it.*

That it is the *Lord's table,* is the appropriate and sufficient *answer* to this objection. Were it *ours,* we might cheerfully admit to it the objector and his friends; but since it is confessedly *the Lord's table,* we dare welcome to it only such as HE invites. The disciples were baptized before Christ instituted and administered to them the supper. John the Baptist was sent to prepare a people for the Lord, and the disciples were evidently among the number of those who *justified God;* and if so, they must have been necessarily *baptized with the baptism of John;* otherwise they could not have been obedient hearers and doers of the word, and imitators of the example of their Lord and master. Luke vii. 29. Mat. iii. 23, 17. 1 Peter, ii. 21. In perfect conformity with this view of the subject, are the words of Peter: *Wherefore of these men which have companied with us, all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from* THE BAPTISM OF JOHN, *unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.* Acts, i. 21, 22. Here we learn that Peter and his brethren *began their Christian profession at the baptism of John,* and hence the inference is irresistible, that there were none but Baptists with our Lord when he gave them the bread and cup, and said *Do this in remembrance of me.* As the sacred oracles, therefore, uniformly teach that Christians, in the Apostles' days, *were baptized before they came together in one place for the breaking of bread,* we are confirmed in the sentiment, that the only guests invited to partake of this feast are such as have been, upon profession of their faith, buried with Christ in baptism; *nor can we approach the table with the unbaptized,* without acting in direct opposition to the precept and example of Him, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

A fourth objection is presented in this shape: *We*

conscientiously believe ourselves to be baptized; you are not the judge; to our own master we stand or fall.

This objection brings us at once to the question, *What is Christian baptism?* Is it sprinkling, or is it pouring? With the New Testament in our hands, we most confidently and unhesitatingly answer, *neither. It is immersion* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. And here we cannot but say to our cavilling friend, *when were you baptized?* "In infancy." Are unconscious babes, or the unbelieving, unprofessing seed of pious parents, proper subjects of baptism? Whether men will hear or whether they will forbear, upon the testimony of God we are obliged to answer, *no.* —These things were not so in the beginning; for it is written, *Then they that gladly received the word were baptized;* Acts 2. And the Jailor *was baptized, he and all his, straightway, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.* Acts xvi. Consequently those who believe and rejoice in Christ Jesus are, *according to the Scriptures,* the only persons to whom we are authorized to administer the ordinance of baptism. But we are told that whether Pædobaptists have perverted christian baptism, both in its design and subjects, or not, *we have no right to judge.* This is equivalent to saying that an individual ought to be admitted to church fellowship *because he thinks himself entitled to that privilege,* without reference to the opinion which the church may entertain upon the subject. It requires no argument to prove the obscurity of this position. To adopt it would speedily ultimate in the dissolution of any society.— That there must be an agreement in sentiment between a church and a candidate for admission to its privileges; and that the church *must necessarily judge* of the candidate's qualifications, are both self-evident and scriptural truths. Since Christ then has commanded us to *hold fast till he come, and to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints,* we are under the most sacred obligations *to exhort one another daily; to warn the unruly; to look diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God;* and to be very careful, not only to venerate his institutions ourselves, but also that they be observed in

their purity, by all such as solicit communion with us at the table of the Lord.

A fifth objection, viz. *That the saints will all commune together in Heaven, and ought therefore to do so on earth,* is thought to be a very strong one, but really we are not able to perceive its force. We rejoice in the anticipation of that perfect union and uninterrupted fellowship, which *the general assembly and church of the first born, whose names are written in Heaven,* shall, to all eternity, enjoy; but whatever may be the terms of communion in the world of glory, we are fully persuaded that *while here,* the revealed will of Christ, and not what shall take place after death, should be the only man of our counsel, *a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path;* and we are equally certain, that when we see Jesus as he is, and love him as we ought, the least of his commandments will not be esteemed either *trifling or nonessential.*

The last objection which our limits will allow us to notice, supposes that *strict communion is inconsistent with brotherly love and Christian forbearance.*

By adverting to the distinction made in the commencement of this letter, between communion with God, our fellow-christians, and a particular church, this objection will be stripped of all its difficulties. It will there be seen that real believers may hold converse with the Deity, and love each other as brethren in the Lord, without walking together in church relationship. *The Baptists* differ from all others in their views of a Gospel Church, and the scriptural qualifications for admission to its privileges; but *these views* we believe to be coincident with the directions of the Saviour, and the example of Apostles and primitive Christians, and having maintained them in the face of persecution, danger, and death, from the days of Paul to the present moment, we cannot abandon them, until convinced that we have hitherto misapprehended altogether the language of the New Testament. Nor can this course of conduct *be righteously construed into a breach of brotherly love and Christian forbearance,* until it can be proved that we ought to love men more than we love God, and that the *charity which rejoiceth not in inquity, but rejoiceth in* THE TRUTH, requires us to disregard the commandments

and dispense with the ordinances of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Finally, brethren, Farewell! Adhere steadfastly to the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, as he hath delivered them to us; and as there is *one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, so we beseech you, that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The Lord be with you all, Amen.*

THE END.

☞ Tracts may be obtained on application to the Agent.

№ 27

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THE DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER.

BY LEIGH RICHMOND.

IT is a delightful employment to discover and trace the operations of divine grace, as they are manifested in the dispositions and lives of God's *real* children. It is peculiarly gratifying to observe how frequently among the poorer classes of mankind, the sunshine of mercy beams upon the heart, and bears witness to the image of Christ which the Spirit of God has impressed thereupon. Among such the sincerity and simplicity of the Christian character appear unencumbered by those obstacles to spirituality of mind and conversation, which too often prove a great hindrance to those who live in the higher ranks.

If we want to see religion in its most simple and pure character, we must look for it among the poor of this world, who are rich in faith. How often is the poor man's cottage the palace of God! Many can truly declare, that they have there learned the most valuable lessons of faith and hope, and there witnessed the most striking demonstrations of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God.

The character which the present narrative is designed to introduce to the notice of my readers, is given *from real life and circumstance:* I first became acquainted with her, by receiving a letter, communicating an account of the last illness and death of a beloved sister, who had expressed a wish that I should bury her.

I was much struck with the simple and earnest strain of devotion which this letter breathed. It was but indifferently written and spelt. But this the rather tended to endear the hitherto unknown writer, as it seemed characteristic of the union of humbleness of station with eminence of piety. I felt quite thankful that I was favoured

with a correspondent of this description; the more so, as such characters were at that time very rare in the neighbourhood. I have often wished that epistolary intercourse of this kind was more encouraged and practised among us. I have the greatest reason to speak well of its effects both on myself and others. Communication by letter, as well as by conversation with the pious poor, has often been the instrument of animating and reviving my own heart in the midst of duty, and of giving me the most profitable information for the general conduct of the ministerial office.

As soon as the letter was read, I inquired who was the bearer of it.

"He is waiting at the outside of the gate, Sir;" was the reply.

I went out to speak to him, and saw a venerable old man, whose long hoary hair and deeply wrinkled countenance commanded more than common respect. He was resting his arm upon the gate, and tears were streaming down his cheeks. On my approach, he made a low bow, and said,

"Sir, I have brought you a letter from my daughter: but I fear you will think us very bold in asking you to take so much trouble."

"By no means," I replied; "I shall be truly glad to oblige you and any of your family in this matter, provided it be quite agreeable to the minister of your parish."

"Sir, he told me yesterday, that he should be very glad if I could procure some gentleman to come and bury my poor child for him, as he lives five miles off, and has particular business on that day: so when I told my daughter, she asked me to come to you, Sir, and bring that letter, which would explain the matter."

I desired him to come into the house, and then said,

"What is your occupation?"

"Sir, I have lived most of my days in a little cottage at ——, six miles from here. I have rented a few acres of ground, and kept some cows, which, in addition to my day labour, has been the means of supporting and bring ing up my family."

"What family have you?"

"A wife, now getting very aged and helpless, two sons

and one daughter; for my other poor dear child is just departed out of this wicked world."

"I hope for a better."

"I hope so too: poor thing, she did not use to take to such good ways as her sister; but I do believe that her sister's manner of talking with her before she died was the means of saving her soul. What a mercy it is to have such a child as mine is! I never thought about my own soul seriously till she, poor girl, begged and prayed me to flee from the wrath to come."

"How old are you?"

"Near seventy, and my wife is older; we are getting old and almost past our labour, but our daughter has left a good place, where she lived in service, on purpose to come home and take care of us and our little dairy. And a dear, dutiful, affectionate girl she is."

"Was she always so?"

"No, Sir; when she was very young, she was all for the world, and pleasure, and dress, and company. Indeed we were all very ignorant, and thought if we took care for this life, and wronged nobody, we should be sure to go to heaven at last. My daughters were both wilful, and like ourselves, strangers to the ways of God and the word of his grace. But the eldest of them went out to service, and some years ago she heard a sermon preached at —— church, by a gentleman that was going to ——, as chaplain to the colony, and from that time she seemed quite another creature. She began to read the Bible, and became sober and steady. The first time she returned home afterwards to see us, she brought us a guinea which she had saved from her wages, and said, as we were getting old, she was sure we should want help; adding, that she did not wish to spend it in fine clothes, as she used to do, only to feed pride and vanity. She said, she would rather show gratitude to her dear father and mother, because Christ had shown such mercy to her.

"We wondered to hear her talk, and took great delight in her company; for her temper and behaviour were so humble and kind, she seemed so desirous to do us good both in soul and body, and was so different from what we had ever seen her before, that, careless and ignorant as we had been, we began to think there must be something

real in religion, or it never could alter a person so much in a little time.

"Her younger sister, poor soul! used to laugh and ridicule her at that time, and said her head was turned with her new ways. 'No, sister,' she would say, 'not my *head*, but I hope my *heart* is turned from the love of sin to the love of God. I wish you may one day see, as I do, the danger and vanity of your present condition.'

"Her poor sister would reply, 'I do not want to hear any of your preaching: I am no worse than other people, and that is enough for me.' 'Well, sister,' Elizabeth would say, 'if you will not hear me, you cannot hinder me from praying for you, which I do with all my heart.'

"And now, Sir, I believe those prayers are answered. For when her sister was taken ill, Elizabeth went to Mrs. ——'s to wait in her place, and take care of her. She said a great deal to her about her soul, and the poor girl began to be so deeply affected, and sensible of her past sin, and so thankful for her sister's kind behaviour, that it gave her great hopes indeed for her sake. When my wife and I went to see her as she lay sick, she told us how grieved and ashamed she was of her past life; but said, she had a hope through grace that her dear sister's Saviour would be her Saviour too: for she saw her own sinfulness, felt her own helplessness, and only wished to cast herself upon Christ as her hope and salvation.

"And now, Sir, she is gone, and I hope and think her sister's prayers for her conversion to God have been answered. The Lord grant the same for her poor father and mother's sake likewise!"

This conversation was a very pleasing commentary upon the letter which I had received, and made me anxious both to comply with the request, and to become acquainted with the writer. I promised the good Dairyman to attend on the Friday at the appointed hour; and after some more conversation, respecting his own state of mind under the present trial, he went away.

He was a reverend old man; his furrowed cheeks, white locks, weeping eyes, bent shoulders, and feeble gait, were characteristic of the aged pilgrim. As he slowly walked onwards, supported by a stick, which seemed to have been the companion of many a long year, a train of

reflections occurred, which I retrace with pleasure and emotion.

At the appointed hour I arrived at the church; and after a little while, was summoned to the church-yard gate to meet the funeral procession. The aged parents, the elder brother, and the sister, with other relatives, formed an affecting group. I was struck with the humble, pious, and pleasing countenance of the young woman from whom I had received the letter. It bore the marks of great seriousness without affectation, and of much serenity mingled with a glow of devotion.

After the service was concluded, I had a short conversation with the good old couple and their daughter. She told me that she intended to remain a week or two at the gentleman's house where her sister died, till another servant should arrive and take her sister's place.

A sweet solemnity often possesses the mind, whilst retracing past intercourse with departed friends. How much is this increased, when they were such as lived and died in the Lord! The remembrance of former scenes and conversations with those, who, we believe, are now enjoying the uninterrupted happiness of a better world, fills the heart with pleasing sadness, and animates the soul with the hopeful anticipation of a day, when the glory of the Lord shall be revealed in the assembling of all his children together, never more to be separated. Whether they were rich or poor, while on earth, is a matter of trifling consequence: the valuable part of their character is, that they are kings and priests unto God, and this is their true nobility.

In a few weeks after the funeral of the younger sister, I rode for the first time to see the family at their own home. The principal part of the road lay through retired, narrow lanes, overarched with groves of nut and other trees, which screened the traveller from the rays of the sun, and afforded many interesting objects for admiration, in the flowers, shrubs, and young trees, which grew upon the high banks on each side of the road.

How much do they lose, who are strangers to serious meditation on the wonders and beauties of nature! How gloriously the God of creation shines in his works! Not a tree, or leaf, or flower; not a bird or insect, but it proclaims in glowing language, "God made me."

As I approached the village where the good old Dairyman dwelt, I observed him in a little field, driving his cows before him, towards a yard and hovel which adjoined his cottage. I advanced very near him, without his observing me, for his sight was dim. On my calling out to him, he started at the sound of my voice, but with much gladness of countenance welcomed me, saying—"Bless your heart, Sir, I am very glad you are come; we have looked for you every day this week."

The cottage-door opened, and the daughter came out, followed by her aged and infirm mother. The sight of me naturally brought to recollection the grave at which we had before met. Tears of affection mingled with the smile of satisfaction with which I was received by these worthy cottagers. I dismounted, and was conducted to the house through a neat little garden, part of which was at that time shaded by two large over-spreading elm-trees. Decency and order were manifest within and without. No excuse was made here, on the score of poverty, for confusion and uncleanliness in the disposal of their little household. Every thing wore the aspect of neatness and propriety. On each side of the fire-place stood an old oaken arm-chair, where the venerable parents rested their weary limbs after the day's labour was over. On a shelf in one corner lay two Bibles, with a few religious books and tracts.

"Sir," said the daughter, "we are not worthy that you should come under our roof. We take it very kind that you should travel so far to see us."

"My Master," I replied, "came a great deal farther to visit us poor sinners. He left the bosom of his Father, laid aside his glory, and came down to this lower world on a visit of mercy and love; and ought not we, if we profess to follow him, to bear each others infirmities, and go about doing good as he did?"

The old man now entered, and joined his wife and daughter in giving me a cordial welcome. Our conversation soon turned to the loss they had so lately sustained. The pious and sensible disposition of the daughter was peculiarly manifested, as well in what she said to her parents, as in what she more immediately addressed to myself. I had now a farther opportunity of remarking the

good sense and agreeable manner which accompanied her expressions of devotedness to God, and love to Christ for the great mercies which he had bestowed upon her. During her residence in different gentlemen's families where she had been in service, she had acquired a superior behaviour and address; but sincere piety rendered her very humble and unassuming in manner and conversation. She seemed anxious to improve the opportunity of my visit to the best purpose for her own and her parents' sake; yet there was nothing of unbecoming forwardness, no self consequence, or conceitedness in her conduct. She united the firmness and solicitude of the Christian, with the modesty of the female and the dutifulness of the daughter. It was impossible to be in her company, and not observe how truly her temper and conversation adorned the principles which she professed.

I soon discovered how eager and how successful also she had been in her endeavours to bring her father and mother to the knowledge and experience of the truth. This is a lovely feature in the character of a young Christian. If it have pleased God in the free dispensations of his mercy to call the child by his grace, while the parent remains still in ignorance and sin, how great is the duty incumbent on that child to do what is possible to promote the conversion of those to whom so much is owing! Happy is it when the ties of grace sanctify those of nature!

The religion of this young woman was of a highly spiritual character, and of no ordinary attainment. Her views of the divine plan in saving the sinner, were clear and scriptural. She spoke much of the joys and sorrows which, in the course of her religious progress, she had experienced: but she was fully sensible that there is far more in real religion than mere occasional transition from one frame of mind and spirits to another. She believed that the experimental acquaintance of the heart with God principally consisted in so living upon Christ by faith, as to aim at living like him by love. She knew that the love of God toward the sinner, and the path of duty prescribed to the sinner, are both of an unchangeable nature. In a believing dependance on the one, and an affectionate walk in the other, she sought and found "the peace of God which passeth all understanding;" "for so he giveth his beloved rest."

Time passed on swiftly with this interesting family and after having partaken of some plain and wholesome refreshment, and enjoyed a few hours conversation with them, I found it was necessary for me to return homewards.

"God send you safe home again," said the aged mother, "and bless the day that brought you to see two poor old creatures, such as we are, in our trouble and affliction. Come again, sir, come again, when you can; and though I am a poor ignorant soul, and not fit to talk to such a gentleman as you, yet my dear child shall speak for me: she is the greatest comfort I have left, and I hope the good Lord will spare her to support my trembling limbs and feeble spirits, till I lie down with my other dear departed child in the grave."

"Trust to the Lord," I answered, "and remember his gracious promise; 'Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoary hairs will I carry you.'"

"I thank you, sir," said the daughter, "for your Christian kindness to me and my friends. I believe the blessing of the Lord has attended your visit, and I hope that I have experienced it to be so. My dear father and mother will, I am sure, remember it; and I rejoice at the opportunity of seeing so kind a friend under this roof. My Saviour has been abundantly good to me in plucking me 'as a brand from the burning,' and showing me the way of life and peace; and I hope it is my heart's desire to live to his glory. But I long to see these dear friends enjoy the power and comfort of religion likewise."

"I think it evident," I replied, "that the promise is fulfilled in their case; 'It shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.'"

"I believe it," she said, "and praise God for the blessed hope."

"Thank him too, that you have been the happy instrument of bringing them to the light."

"I do, sir; yet, when I think of my own unworthiness and insufficiency, I rejoice with trembling."

"Sir," said the good old man, "I am sure the Lord will reward you for this kindness. Pray for us, old as we are, and sinners as we have been, that yet he would have mercy upon us at the eleventh hour. Poor Betsy strives

much for our sakes, both in body and soul; she works hard all day to save us trouble, and I fear has not strength to support all she does; and then she talks to us, and reads to us, and prays for us, that we may be saved from the wrath to come. Indeed, Sir, she's a rare child to us."

"Peace be to you and to all that belong to you!"

"Amen, and thank you, dear Sir," was echoed from each tongue.

Thus we parted for that time. My returning meditations were sweet, and, I hope, profitable.

Many other visits were afterwards made by me to this peaceful cottage, and I always found increasing reason to thank God for the intercourse I there enjoyed.

Declining health seemed to indicate the will of God concerning the daughter. But her character, conduct, and experience of the divine favour, increased in brightness as the setting sun of her mortal life approached its horizon.

The pale wasting consumption, which is the Lord's instrument for removing so many thousands every year from the land of the living, made hasty strides on her constitution. The hollow eye, the distressing cough, and the often too flattering flush on the cheek, foretold the approach of death.

What a field for usefulness and affectionate attention, on the part of ministers and Christian friends, is opened by the frequent attacks, and lingering progress of *consumptive* illness! How many such precious opportunities are daily lost, where Providence seems in so marked a way to afford time and space for serious and godly instructions! Of how many may it be said, "The way of peace have they not known!" for not one friend ever came nigh, to warn them to "flee from the wrath to come."

I one day received a short note to the following effect:

"Dear Sir—I should be very glad, if your convenience will allow, that you would come and see a poor unworthy sinner: my hour glass is nearly run out, but I hope I can see Christ to be precious to my soul. Your conversation has often been blessed to me, and I now feel the need of

it more than ever. My father and mother send their duty to you.

"From your obedient and unworthy servant,

"E. W."

I obeyed the summons that same afternoon. On my arrival at the Dairyman's cottage, his wife opened the door. The tears streamed down her cheek, as she silently shook her head. Her heart was full. She tried to speak, but could not. I took her by the hand, and said,

"My good friend, all is right, and as the Lord in wisdom and mercy directs."

"O! my Betsy, my dear girl, is so bad, Sir; what shall I do without her?—I thought I should have gone first to the grave, but——"

"But, the Lord sees good, that, before you die yourself, you shall behold your child safe home to glory. Is there no mercy in this?"

"O dear Sir, I am very old, and very weak; and she is a dear child, the staff and prop of a poor old creature, as I am."

As I advanced, I saw Elizabeth sitting by the fire-side, supported in an arm-chair by pillows, with every mark of rapid decline and approaching death. A sweet smile of friendly complacency enlightened her pale countenance, as she said,

"This is very kind indeed, Sir, to come so soon after I sent to you. You find me daily wasting away, and I cannot have long to continue here. My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart, and I trust will be my portion for ever."

The conversation was occasionally interrupted by her cough and want of breath. Her tone of voice was clear, though feeble; her manner solemn and collected, and her eye, though more dim than formerly, by no means wanting in liveliness, as she spoke. I had frequently admired the superior language in which she expressed her ideas, as well as the scriptural consistency with which she communicated her thoughts. She had a good natural understanding; and grace, as is generally the case, had much improved it. On the present occasion, I could not help thinking she was peculiarly favoured. The whole strength

of gracious and natural attainments seemed to be in full exercise.

After taking my seat, I said to Elizabeth,

"I hope you enjoy a sense of the Divine presence, and can rest all upon Him who has 'been with thee,' and has kept 'thee in all places whither thou hast gone,' and will bring thee at length into his own everlasting rest."

"Sir, I think I can. My mind has lately been sometimes clouded, but I believe it has been partly owing to the great weakness and suffering of my bodily frame, and partly to the envy of my spiritual enemy, who would persuade me that Christ has no love for me, and that I have been a self-deceiver."

"And do you give way to these suggestions? Can you doubt amidst such numerous tokens of past and present mercy?"

"No, Sir, I mostly am enabled to preserve a clear evidence of his love. I do not wish to add to my other sins that of denying his manifest goodness to my soul. I would acknowledge it to his praise and glory."

"What is your present view of the state in which you were, before you felt seriously concerned about the salvation of your soul?"

"Sir, I was a thoughtless girl, fond of dress and finery; I loved the world and the things that are in the world; I lived in service among worldly people, and never had the happiness of being in a family where worship was regarded, and the souls of the servants cared for either by master or mistress. I went once on a Sunday to church, more to see and be seen, than to pray or hear the word of God. I thought I was quite good enough to be saved, and disliked and often laughed at religious people. I was in great darkness; I knew nothing of the way of salvation: I never prayed, except in the most formal and lifeless manner, nor was sensible of the awful danger of a prayerless state. I wished to maintain the character of a good servant, and was much lifted up whenever I met with applause. I was tolerably moral and decent in my conduct, from motives of carnal and worldly policy; but I was a stranger to God and Christ; I neglected my soul; and had I died in such a state, hell must, and would justly, have been my portion."

"How long is it since you heard the sermon which you hope, through God's blessing, effected the change in your heart?"

"About five years. It was reported that a Mr. —— was to preach at ——— church. Many advised me not to go, for fear he should turn my head; as they said he held strange notions. But curiosity, and an opportunity of appearing in a new gown, which I was very proud of, induced me to ask leave of my mistress to go. Indeed, Sir, I had no better motives than vanity and curiosity. Yet thus it pleased the Lord to order it for his own glory.

"At length, the clergyman gave out his text: 'Be ye clothed with humility.' He drew a comparison between the clothing of the body with that of the soul. At a very early part of his discourse, I began to feel ashamed of my passion for fine dressing and apparel; but when he came to describe the garment of salvation with which a Christian is clothed, I felt a powerful discovery of the nakedness of my own soul, I saw that I had neither the humility mentioned in the text, nor any one part of the true Christian character. I looked at my gay dress, and blushed for shame on account of my pride. I looked at the minister, and he seemed to be as a messenger sent from heaven to open my eyes.

"From that time I was led, through a course of private prayer, reading, and meditation, to see my lost estate as a sinner, and the great mercy of God through Jesus Christ in raising sinful dust and ashes to a share in the glorious happiness of heaven. And, O Sir! what a Saviour I have found! He is more than I could ask or desire. In his fulness I have found all that my poverty could need; in his bosom I have found a resting-place from all sin and sorrow; in his word I have found strength against doubt and unbelief."

"Were you not soon convinced," I said, "that your salvation must be an act of entire grace on the part of God, wholly independent of your own previous works or deservings?"

"Yes, Sir, I immediately saw that if ever I were saved, it must be by the free mercy of God, and that the whole praise and honour of the work would be his from first to last."

"What change did you perceive in yourself with respect to the world?"

"It appeared all vanity and vexation of spirit. I found it necessary to my peace of mind to come out from among them and be separate. I gave myself to prayer; and many a happy hour of secret delight I enjoyed in communion with God. Often I mourned over my sins, and sometimes had a great conflict through unbelief, fear, temptation to return back again to my old ways, and a variety of difficulties which lay in my way. But he who loved me with an everlasting love, drew me by his loving kindness, showed me the way of peace, gradually strengthened me in the resolutions of leading a new life, and taught me, that while without him I could do nothing, I yet might do all things through his strength."

"Did you not find many difficulties in your situation owing to your change of principle and practice?"

"Yes, Sir, every day of my life. I was laughed at by some, scolded at by others, scorned by enemies, and pitied by friends. I was called hypocrite, saint, and many more names which were meant to render me hateful in the sight of the world. But I esteemed the reproach of the cross an honour. I forgave and prayed for my persecutors, and remembered how very lately I had acted the same part towards others myself. I thought also that Christ endured the contradiction of sinners; and, as the disciple is not above his Master, I was glad to be in any way conformed to his sufferings?"

"Did you not then feel for your family at home?"

"Yes, that I did indeed, Sir; they were never out of my thoughts. I prayed continually for them, and had a longing desire to do them good. In particular I felt for my father and mother, as they were getting into years, and were very ignorant and dark in matters of religion."

"Ay," interrupted her mother sobbing, "ignorant and dark, sinful and miserable we were, till this dear Betsy—this dear Betsy—this dear child, Sir, brought Christ Jesus home to her poor father and mother's house."

"No, dearest mother; say rather, Christ Jesus brought your poor daughter home, to tell you what he had done for her soul, and, I hope, to do the same for yours."

At this moment the Dairyman came in with two pails

of milk hanging from the yoke on his shoulders. He had stood behind the half-opened door for a few minutes, and heard the last sentences spoken by his wife and daughter.

"Blessing and mercy upon her!" said he, "it is very true; she left a good place of service on purpose to live with us, that she might help us both in soul and body. Sir, don't she look very ill? I think, Sir, we shan't have her here long."

"Leave that to the Lord," said Elizabeth. "All our times are in his hand, and happy it is that they are. I am willing to go; are not you willing, my father, to part with me into his hands who gave me to you at first?"

"Ask me any question in the world, but that," said the weeping father.

"I know," said she, "you wish me to be happy."

"I do, I do," answered he: "let the Lord do with you and us as best pleases him."

I then asked her, on what her present consolations chiefly depended, in the prospect of approaching death.

"Entirely, Sir, on my view of Christ. When I look at myself, many sins, infirmities, and imperfections, cloud the image of Christ, which I want to see in my own heart. But when I look at the Saviour himself, he is altogether lovely; there is not one spot in his countenance, nor one cloud over all his perfections.

"I think of his coming in the flesh, and it reconciles me to the sufferings of the body; for he had them as well as I. I think of his temptations, and believe that he is able to succour me when I am tempted. Then I think of his cross, and learn to bear my own. I reflect on his death, and long to die unto sin, so that it may no longer have dominion over me. I sometimes think on his resurrection, and trust that he has given me a part in it, for I feel that my affections are set upon things above. Chiefly I take comfort in thinking of him as at the right hand of the Father, pleading my cause, and rendering acceptable even my feeble prayers, both for myself, and, as I hope, for my dear friends.

"These are the views which, through mercy, I have of my Saviour's goodness; and they have made me wish and strive in my poor way to serve him, to give myself up to him, and to labour to do my duty in that state of life into which it has pleased him to call me.

"A thousand times I should have fallen and fainted, if he had not upheld me. I feel that I am nothing without him. He is all in all.

"Just so far as I can cast my care upon him, I find strength to do his will. May he give me grace to trust him to the last moment! I do not fear death, because I believe that he has taken away its sting. And O! what happiness beyond!—Tell me, Sir, whether you think I am right. I hope I am under no delusion. I dare not look for my hope in any thing short of the entire fulness of Christ. When I ask my own heart a question, I am afraid to trust it, for it is treacherous, and has often deceived me. But when I ask Christ, he answers me with promises that strengthen and refresh me, and leaves me no room to doubt his power and will to save. I am in his hands, and would remain there; and I do believe that he will never leave me nor forsake me. He loved me and gave himself for me, and I believe that his gifts and callings are without repentance. In this hope I live, in this hope I wish to die."

I looked around me, as she was speaking, and thought, "Surely this is none other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven." Every thing appeared neat, cleanly, and interesting. The afternoon had been rather overcast with dark clouds; but just now the setting sun shone brightly and somewhat suddenly into the room.

This gleam of setting sunshine was emblematical of the bright and serene close of this young Christian's departing season.

Some further affectionate conversation, and a short prayer, closed this interview.

From this time, I considered her end as fast approaching. One day I received a hasty summons to inform me that she was dying. It was brought by a soldier, whose countenance bespoke seriousness, good sense, and piety.

"I am sent, Sir, by the father and mother of Elizabeth W——, at her own particular request, to say, how much they all wished to see you. She is going *home*, Sir, very fast indeed."

"Have you known her long?" I replied.

"About a month, Sir: I love to visit the sick: and hearing of her case from a person who lives close by our

camp, I went to see her. I bless God that ever I did go. Her conversation has been very profitable to me."

"I rejoice," said I, "to see in you, as I trust, a *brother soldier*. Though we differ in our outward regimentals, I hope we serve under the same spiritual captain. I will go with you."

My horse was soon ready. My military companion walked by my side, and gratified me with very sensible and pious conversation. He related some remarkable testimonies of the excellent disposition of the Dairyman's daughter, as they appeared from recent intercourse which he had had with her.

Conversation beguiled the distance, and shortened the apparent time of our journey, till we were nearly arrived at the Dairyman's cottage.

As we approached it, we became silent. Thoughts of death, eternity, and salvation, inspired by the sight of the house where a dying believer lay, filled my own mind, and I doubt not, that of my companion also.

No living object yet appeared, except the Dairyman's dog, keeping a kind of mute watch at the door.

The soldier took my horse, and tied it in a shed. A solemn serenity appeared to surround the whole place; it was only interrupted by the breezes passing through the elm-trees, which stood near the house, and which my imagination indulged itself in thinking were plaintive sighs of sorrow. I gently opened the door; no one appeared, and all was still silent. The soldier followed; we came to the foot of the stairs.

"They are come," said a voice which I knew to be the father's; "they are come."

He appeared at the top; I gave him my hand, and said nothing. On entering the room above, I saw the aged mother and her son supporting the much-loved daughter and sister; the son's wife sat weeping in a window-seat; two or three persons attended in the room, to discharge any office which friendship or necessity might require.

I sat down by the bed-side. The mother could not weep, but now and then sighed deeply, as she alternately looked at Elizabeth and at me. The big tear rolled down the brother's cheek, and testified an affectionate regard. The good old man stood at the foot of the bed, leaning

upon the post, and unable to take his eyes off the child from whom he was so soon to part.

Elizabeth's eyes were closed, and as yet she perceived me not. But over her face, though pale, sunk, and hollow, the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, had cast a triumphant calm.

The soldier, after a short pause, silently reached out his Bible towards me, pointing with his finger at 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 57. I then broke silence by reading the passage, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

At the sound of these words her eyes opened, and something like a ray of divine light beamed on her countenance, as she said, "Victory, victory! through our Lord Jesus Christ."

She relapsed again, taking no further notice of any one present.

"God be praised for the triumph of faith!" said I.

"Amen," replied the soldier.

The Dairyman's uplifted eye showed that the Amen was in his heart, though his tongue failed to utter it.

A short struggling for breath took place in the dying young woman, which was soon over; and then I said to her,

"My dear friend, do you not feel that you are supported?"

"The Lord deals very gently with me," she replied.

"Are not his promises now very precious to you?"

"They are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus."

"Are you in much bodily pain?"

"So little that I almost forget it."

"How good the Lord is!"

"And how unworthy am I!"

"You are going to see him as he is."

"I think——I hope——I believe that I am."

She again fell into a short slumber.

Looking at her mother, I said, "What a mercy to have a child so near heaven as your's is!"

"And what a mercy," she replied, in broken accents, "if her poor old mother might but follow her there! But, Sir, it is so hard to part!"

"I hope through grace by faith you will soon meet, to part no more: it will be but a little while."

"Sir," said the Dairyman, "that thought supports me, and the Lord's goodness makes me feel more reconciled than I was."

"Father——mother,"——said the reviving daughter, "he is good to me——trust him, praise him evermore."

"Sir," added she, in a faint voice, "I want to thank you for your kindness to me——I want to ask a favour; ——you buried my sister——will you do the same for me?"

"All shall be as you wish, if God permit," I replied.

"Thank you, Sir, thank you;——I have another favour to ask——When I am gone, remember my father and mother. They are old, but I hope the good work is begun in their souls——My prayers are heard——Pray, come and see them——I cannot speak much, but I want to speak for their sakes——Sir, remember them."——

The aged parents now sighed and sobbed aloud, uttering broken sentences, and gained some relief by such an expression of their feelings.

At length I said to Elizabeth, "Do you experience any doubts or temptations on the subject of your eternal safety?"

"No, sir; the Lord deals very gently with me, and gives me peace."

"What are your views of the dark valley of death, now that you are passing through it?"

"It is *not* dark."

"Why so?"

"My Lord is *there*, and he is my light and my salvation."

"Have you any fears of more bodily suffering?"

"The Lord deals so gently with me; I can trust him."

Something of a convulsion came on. When it was passed, she said again and again,

"The Lord deals very gently with me. Lord, I am thine, save me——Blessed Jesus——precious Saviour ——His blood cleanseth from all sin——Who shall separate?——His name is Wonderful——Thanks be to God ——He giveth us the victory——I, even I, am saved ——O grace, mercy, and wonder——Lord, receive my

spirit!——Dear Sir,——dear father, mother, friends, I am going——but all is well, well, well.——"

She relapsed again—We knelt down to prayer—The Lord was in the midst of us, and blessed us.

She did not again revive while I remained, nor ever speak any more words which could be understood. She slumbered for about ten hours, and at last sweetly fell asleep in the arms of that Lord, who had dealt so "gently" with her.

I left the house an hour after she had ceased to speak. I pressed her hand as I was taking leave, and said, "Christ is the resurrection and the life." She gently returned the pressure, but could neither open her eyes, nor utter a reply.

I never had witnessed a scene so impressive as this before. It completely filled my imagination as I returned home.

"Farewell," thought I, "dear friend, till the morning of an eternal day shall renew our personal intercourse. Thou wast a brand plucked from the burning, that thou mightest become a star shining in the firmament of glory. I have seen thy light, and thy good works, and will therefore glorify our Father which is in heaven. I have seen, in thy example, what it is to be a sinner freely saved by grace. I have learned from thee, as in a living mirror, *who* it is that begins, continues, and ends the work of faith in love. Jesus is all in all: he will and shall be glorified. He won the crown, and alone deserves to wear it. May no one attempt to rob him of his glory! He saves, and saves to the uttermost. Farewell, dear sister in the Lord. Thy flesh and thy heart may fail; but God is the strength of thy heart, and shall be thy portion for ever."

Permission was obtained, as before in the case of her sister, that I should perform the funeral service. Many pleasing yet melancholy thoughts were connected with the fulfilment of this task. I retraced the numerous and important conversations which I had held with her. But these could now no longer be maintained on earth. I reflected on the interesting and improving nature of *Christian* friendships, whether formed in palaces or in cottages; and felt thankful that I had so long enjoyed that privilege with the subject of this memorial.

At that moment, the first sound of a tolling bell struck my ear. It proceeded from a village church in the valley directly beneath the ridge of a high hill, over which I had taken my way. It was Elizabeth's funeral knell.

The sound was solemn; it seemed to say, "Hear my warning voice, thou son of man. There is but a step between thee and death. Arise, prepare thine house, for thou shalt die, and not live."

The Dairyman's cottage was rather more than a mile distant from the church. A lane, quite overshaded with trees and high hedges, led from the foot of the hill to his dwelling. It was impossible at that time to overlook the suitable gloom of such an approach to the house of mourning.

I was requested to go into the chamber where the relatives and a few other friends were gone to take a last look at the remains of Elizabeth.

It is not easy to describe the sensation which the mind experiences on the first sight of a dead countenance, which, when living, was loved and esteemed for the sake of that soul which used to give it animation. A deep and awful view of the separation that has taken place between the soul and body of the deceased, since we last beheld them, occupies the feelings; our friend seems to be both near and yet afar off. The most interesting and valuable part is fled away; what remains is but the earthly perishing habitation, no longer occupied by its tenant. Yet the features present the accustomed association of friendly intercourse. For one moment we could think them asleep. The next reminds us that the blood circulates no more; the eye has lost its power of seeing, the ear of hearing, the heart of throbbing, and the limbs of moving. Quickly, a thought of glory breaks in upon the mind, and we imagine the dear departed soul to be arrived at its long wished for rest. It is surrounded by cherubim and seraphim, and sings the song of Moses and the Lamb on Mount Zion. Amid the solemn stillness of the chamber of death, imagination hears heavenly hymns chanted by the spirits of just men made perfect. In another moment, the livid lips and sunken eye of the clay-cold corpse recall our thoughts to earth and to ourselves again. And while we think of mortality, sin, death, and the grave, we feel the

prayer rise in our bosom, "O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

If there be a moment when Christ and salvation, death, judgment, heaven, and hell, appear more than ever to be momentous subjects of meditation, it is that which brings us to the side of a coffin containing the body of a departed believer.

"Mercy, mercy upon a poor old creature almost broken down with age and grief!—What shall I do!—Betsy's gone. My daughter's dead. O my child! I shall never see thee more.—God be merciful to me a sinner!" sobbed out the poor mother.

"That last prayer, my dear good woman," said I, "will bring you and your child together again. It is a cry that has brought thousands to glory. It brought your daughter there, and I hope it will bring you thither likewise. God will in no wise cast out any that come to him."

"My dear," said the Dairyman, breaking the long silence he had maintained, "let us trust God with our child; and let us trust him with our own selves. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord! We are old, and can have but a little farther to travel in our journey, and then——" he could say no more.

The time for departing to the church was now at hand. In a little time the procession formed: it was rendered the more interesting by the consideration of so many that followed the coffin being persons of a devoted and spiritual character. The distance was rather more than a mile.

We at length arrived at the church. Looking upwards as I drew near the porch, I observed a dial on the wall. The sun's declining rays directed the shadow to the evening hour. As I passed underneath this simple but solemn monitor, I was reminded of the lapse of time, the uncertainty of life, and sure approach of eternity. I thought with David, "We are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." "Lord, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

The service was heard with deep and affectionate attention. We committed our dear sister's body to the earth, in full hope of a joyful resurrection from the dead.

My reader, rich or poor, shall you and I appear there likewise? Are we "clothed with humility," and arrayed in the wedding garment of a Redeemer's righteousness? Are we turned from idols to serve the living God? Are we sensible of our own emptiness, and therefore flying to a Saviour's fulness to obtain grace and strength? Do we indeed live in Christ, and on him, and by him, and with him? Is he our all in all? Are we "lost and found?" "dead and alive again?"

Reader, dost thou resemble *her*, as she resembled Christ? Art thou made rich by faith? Hast thou a crown laid up for thee? Is thine heart set upon heavenly riches: If not, read this story once more, and then pray earnestly for like precious faith.

But if, through grace, thou dost love and serve the Redeemer that saved the Dairyman's Daughter, grace, peace, and mercy be with thee! The lines are fallen unto thee in pleasant places: thou hast a goodly heritage. Press forward in duty, and wait upon the Lord, possessing thy soul in holy patience. Thou hast just been with me to the grave of a departed believer. Now "go thy way, till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." (Dan. xii. 13.)

NOTE. The mother died about six months after her daughter; and I have good reason to believe that God was merciful to her, and took her to himself. May every converted child thus labour and pray for the salvation of their unconverted parents. The father continued after her, and adorned his old age with a walk and conversation becoming the Gospel. Whether he yet lives, I know not; but probably before this time, (1812,) the daughter and both her parents are met together in "the land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign."

VISIT TO THE GRAVE
OF THE DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER,
JULY, 1823.

THE termination of human life, (says a writer in the London Baptist Magazine, for June, 1824,) presents a scene at which the worldling shrinks with horror, whilst the faithful follower of the Lamb views death as the last

milestone towards the house of an affectionate father, where he expects to meet his nearest and dearest friends. Many, indeed, are the afflictions of those whom God is training for a better world; but how often have we seen an affliction leave the christian far more holy and happy than it found him! No trial, however, can ever be expected to leave him so holy and so happy as death will. In this respect, the *last* affliction is incomparably the best. Preceding calamities are like waves in the sea, that follow in thick succession; but death is so blessed, so sanctified, and so closely connected with unmingled happiness, that it leaves the christian like pure gold just taken from the furnace, and which needs *no other* furnace. In previous afflictions, affectionate friends may have sympathized, and eventually rejoiced in the happy results: in the last affliction, mortals may see the beginning, but angels only can see the close.

Such reflections as these were suggested by a visit to the *Isle of Wight*,* in company with a long respected christian friend, who kindly solicited the writer to leave, for a few days, the cares and hurry of active life, for a scene so conducive to health, and so exhilarating to the mind. Nor was the invitation a deceptive one; for it was scarcely possible to contemplate the works of God in that lovely island, without being reminded of that paradise which contributed to the happiness of our first parents, in the days of their innocence, and which could not THEN fail to excite their holy admiration, and to elicit from them that glory to the Creator which corresponded with the powers with which they were endowed. We were effectually reminded, however, that the Isle of Wight was not the garden of Eden; for we beheld the memorials, and the triumphs of death.

On entering the church yards, we saw, in *conspicuous* characters, the records of the generation that had passed away within our own remembrance. Near *these* inscriptions we saw, in *fading* characters, a tribute of respect to the generation that passed away in the days of our fathers. We also saw stones and monuments covered

* This beautiful island, which is about twenty-one miles long and thirteen broad, lies south of England, and very near the shore.

with yellow and hoary lichen, and containing an account of the grandfathers, and great grandfathers, and still more remote ancestors, till our attempts to make out the inscriptions ceased to be successful. On these occasions the reader may easily conceive that we were strongly impressed with the awful and extensive dominion of the king of terrors. Our object, however, was not so much to visit the tombs of the unknown among the dead, as to repair to those church yards where we could find the sequestered spots devoted to those concerning whom we each could say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" In such researches, we found the grave of "Little Jane," "the Young Cottager," in Brading church yard, where the writer copied her Epitaph.

On the following day, (July 16, 1823,) we visited the cottage where "the *Dairyman's Daughter*" had resided, and where she closed the days of her pilgrimage. Her mother, we were informed, did not long survive her affectionate daughter; and the aged Dairyman, we learned, had been dead a few years. The cottage is now occupied by her brother and his wife, both of whom we saw: and, among other interesting particulars, we were highly gratified with a sight of Elizabeth's Bible; on inspecting which we saw, not only her own hand-writing, but also that of a succession of ancestors for more than a century before her death.

In passing on to the remainder of the account, it is proper to state next, that, proceeding over the same ground as the funeral procession had done, we arrived at Arreton church yard, where we found, without difficulty, the grave we sought. A stone has been erected and is inscribed,

"*TO THE MEMORY OF*
ELIZABETH WALLBRIDGE,
THE DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER,
Who died May 30, 1801, aged 31 years.
She being dead, yet speaketh."

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

№ 28

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THE

VILLAGE IN THE MOUNTAINS.

M——, a merchant at the head of one of the first commercial houses in Paris,* had lately occasion to visit the manufactories established in the mountainous tracts of the Departments of the Loire and the Puy de Dome. The road that conducted him back to Lyons traversed a country rich in natural productions, and glowing with all the charms of an advanced and promising spring. The nearer view was unusually diversified; not only by the fantastic forms of mountains, the uncertain course of small and tributary streams, and the varying hues of fields of pasture, corn, vines, and vegetables; but by the combinations and contrasts of nature and of art, and the occupations of rural and commercial industry. Factories and furnaces were seen rising amidst barns and sheep-cotes; peasants were digging, and ploughs gliding amidst forges and founderies; verdant slopes and graceful clumps of trees were scattered amidst the black and ugly mouths of exhausted coal pits; and the gentle murmur of the stream was subdued by the loud rattle of the loom. Sometimes M—— and his friend halted amidst all that is delightful and soothing; and after a short advance found themselves amidst barrenness, deformity, and confusion. The remoter scenery was not less impressive. Behind them were the rugged mountains of Puy de Dome; the lofty Tavare lifted its majestic head beside them, and far before appeared the brilliant summit of Mont Blanc.

In this state of mind he arrived at the skirts of a ham-

* An American gentleman, well known to the friends of benevolent exertions.

let, placed on the declivity of a mountain; and being desirous of finding a shorter and more retired track, he stopped at a little house to inquire the way. From the windows several females were watching the movements of a little child; and just as M—— inquired for a road across the mountains, the infant was in danger of being crushed by a coal cart which had entered the street. The cries and alarms of the females were met by the activity of the travellers, and the companion of M—— snatched the infant from danger, and placed him in security. An elderly female from the second story gave M——, who was still on his horse, the directions he desired; and, at the same time, expressed her uneasiness that the gentleman should have had the trouble to seek the child. "Madam, (interrupted M——,) my friend is only performing his duty: we ought to do to another as we would that another should do to us; and, in this wretched world, we are bound to assist each other. You are kind enough to direct us travellers in the right road, and surely the least we can do is to rescue your child from danger. The Holy Scriptures teach us these duties, and the Gospel presents us the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were in ignorance and danger, came to our world to seek and to save that which was lost." "Ah! Sir, (replied the good woman,) you are very condescending, and what you say is very true; but your language surprises me: it is so many years since in this village we have heard such truths, and especially from the lips of a stranger." "Madam, (resumed M——,) we are all strangers here, and sojourners, bound to eternity; there is but one road, one guide, one Saviour, who can conduct us safely; if we feel this, young or old, rich or poor, we are all one in Christ; and however scattered on earth, shall all arrive at the heavenly city, to which he is gone to prepare mansions for us." "These doctrines, Sir, (exclaimed the female,) support the hearts of many of us, who have scarcely travelled beyond our own neighbourhood; and it is so rare and so delightful to hear them from others, that if it will not be an abuse of your Christian politeness, I would request you to alight and visit my humble apartment." "I shall comply most cheerfully with your request, (replied M——,) for though time is precious, I

shall be thankful to spend a few minutes in these mountains, among those with whom I hope to dwell for ever on Mount Sion." My friend M—— ascended to the second story, followed by his companion. He found the female with whom he had conversed surrounded by her daughters and her grand-daughters, all busily employed in five looms, filled with galloons and ribbons, destined for the capital and the most distant cities of the world. The good widow was between sixty and seventy years of age; her appearance was neat and clean; and all the arrangements of her apartment bespoke industry, frugality, and piety. "Ah! Sir, (she exclaimed, as M—— entered,) how happy am I to receive such a visiter!" "Madam, (replied M——,) I am not worthy to enter under this roof." "Why, Sir, (exclaimed the widow,) you talked to us of Jesus Christ and ——" "Yes, Madam, but I am a poor guilty sinner, and hope only for salvation through the cross. I was yesterday at St. ——, where they were planting a cross with great ceremony; were you there?" "No, Sir; for it is of little use to erect crosses in the streets, if we do not carry the cross in our hearts, and are not crucified to the world. But, Sir, if you will not be offended, may I ask you what you are called?" M——, pretending to give a general sense to the French phraseology, answered, "My name, Madam, is ——." "Thank you Sir, I shall not forget; but this is not what I meant; I wished to know whether you are Protestant or Catholic, a pastor or a priest?" "Madam, I have not the honour to be either; I am a merchant; I desire to be a Christian, and to have no other title but a disciple of Christ." "That is exactly as we are here, Sir, (exclaimed the good widow, and added,) but, as you are so frank, are you, Sir, Catholic or Protestant?" "Catholic," replied M——. Madam looked confused, and observed "that it was rare for the Catholics to talk as her visiter had done." "I am a Catholic, (resumed M——,) but not a member of the *Roman* Catholic church. I love all that love our Lord Jesus in sincerity. I do not ask in what fold they feed, so that they are guided and nourished by the good Shepherd and Bishop of souls." "O what a favour the Lord has granted us to meet with a Christian like ourselves, (said the affected widow, look-

ing round her,) we desire to live in charity with all mankind. But, to be frank also, Sir, we do not go to mass, nor to confession, for we do not learn from our Testament, which is indeed almost worn out, that we are required to confess to sinners like ourselves, nor to worship the host, nor to perform penance for the salvation of our souls; and, we believe we can serve God acceptably in a cave, or in a chamber, or on a mountain." "I confess, Madam, in my turn, (said M——,) that I am exceedingly astonished to find such persons on such a spot; pray how many may there be of your sentiments?" "Here, Sir, and scattered over the mountains, there are from three to four hundred. We meet on Sabbath evenings, and as often as we can, to pray to Jesus, to read the Testament, and to converse about the salvation of our souls. We are so much persecuted by the clergy, that we cannot appear as publickly as we wish. We are called *beguines** and fools; but I can bear this, and I hope a great deal more, for him who has suffered so much for us.

While the conversation, of which this is a sketch, transpired, the rooms had filled, the neighbours had been informed and introduced, at the request of the worthy hostess; and as many as could quit their occupations pressed to hear of the things of the kingdom of God. M—— desired to see the New Testament. It was presented. The title page was gone, the leaves were almost worn to shreds by the fingers of the weavers and labourers, and M—— could not discover the edition. A female, of respectable appearance, approached M——, and said, "Sir, for several years I have sought every where a New Testament, and I have offered any price for one in all the neighbouring villages, but in vain. Could you, Sir, possibly procure me a copy, I will gladly pay you any sum you demand——" "Madam, I will not only procure you one, (replied M——, eagerly,) but in forty-eight hours I will send you half a dozen." "Is it possible? (exclaimed the astonished villagers.) May we, Sir, believe the good news? May we rely on your promise? It appears too great—too good—we will pay for them now, Sir, if you please." "You may depend on receiving them, (said M——,) if God prolongs my life. But I entreat you to do me the fa-

* A term implying much the same as Methodist in England.

vour to accept them, as a proof of my Christian regard, and an expression of my gratitude, for having been permitted to enjoy, in this unpromising spot, the refreshing company of the followers of Christ." The conversation then turned on the value of the sacred volume, and the sinfulness of those who withheld it from perishing and dejected sinners. After some time, the hostess inquired, "Pray, Sir, can you tell us if any thing extraordinary is passing in the world? We are shut out from all intercourse; but we have an impression that God is commencing a great work in the earth, and that wonderful events are coming to pass." "Great events have taken place, and news is arriving every day, (said M——,) from all parts of the world, of the progress of the Gospel, and the fulfilments of the Holy Scriptures." He then gave to his attentive and enraptured auditory an outline of the moral changes accomplished by the diffusion of the Bible, the labours of Missionaries, and the establishment of schools; but only such an outline as was suited to their general ignorance of the state of what is called the religious world. And when he had concluded, they all joined in the prayer—Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is done in heaven.

Anxious as was M—— to pursue his journey, he devoted three hours to this interview. He exhorted them to receive and practise only what they found in the Scriptures, to cleave to the Lord, with full purpose of heart, and promised to use his influence to obtain for them a pastor who should feed them with knowledge and understanding. The termination of this extraordinary meeting was most affecting; tears of pleasure, gratitude, and regret, streamed from the eyes of the mountaineers; and the traveller, though more deeply moved by having seen the grace of God than by all the scenes through which he had passed, went on his way rejoicing, and, following the directions of the good widow, he arrived at the town of S——. In this town he had correspondents among the principal inhabitants and authorities; and under the impression of all he had witnessed, he inquired, as if with the curiosity of a traveller, the name of the hamlet he had passed on the mountain, and the nature of the employment, and the character of its inhabitants. "The men

(said the mayor) work in the mines, drive the teams, and labour in the fields: and the women and children weave. They are a very curious people, *outres illumines*, (new lights,) but the most honest work people of the country —probity itself. We have no occasion to weigh our silk, either when we give it out or take it in, for we are sure not to lose the value of a farthing; and the kindest creatures in the world—they will take their shirts off their backs to give to any one in distress; indeed, there is no wretchedness among them, for though poor, they are industrious, temperate, charitable, and always assist each other; but touch them on their religion, and they are almost idiots. They never go to mass nor confession: in fact they are not Christians, though the most worthy people in the world;—and so droll: imagine those poor people, after working all the week, instead of enjoying the Sunday, and going to fetes and balls to amuse themselves, they meet in each other's houses, and sometimes in the mountains, to read some book, and pray and sing hymns. They are very clever work-people, but they pass their Sundays and holidays stupidly enough." This testimony, so honourable to his new acquaintance, was confirmed to M—— from several quarters; and he learnt from others, what he had not been told by themselves, that besides their honesty and charity, so great is their zeal, that they flock from the different hamlets, and meet in the mountains in cold and bad weather, at eight or nine o'clock at night, to avoid the interruption of their enemies, and to sing and pray.

These accounts were not calculated to lessen the interest excited in the breast of M——, and immediately on his arrival at Lyons he despatched six copies of the New Testament, and some copies of a Tract, entitled "*Les Deux Viellards.*" (The Two Old Men.) Shortly after his return to Paris, M—— received, through one of his correspondents of Lyons, a letter from the excellent widow with whom he had conversed. The modesty, dignity, and piety of this letter, has induced me to subjoin a literal translation, not only to evince the influence of true religion, but to satisfy the reader that in this narration no exaggerated statement has been made of the character of the mountaineers of St. ———.

"Sir, I have the honour to write you, to assure you of my very humble respects, and at the same time to acknowledge the reception of the six copies of the New Testament which you had the goodness and the generosity to send us. My family, myself, and my neighbours, know not how adequately to express our sincere gratitude: for we have nothing in the world so precious as that sacred volume, which is the best food of our souls, and our certain guide to the heavenly Jerusalem.

"As we believe, and are assured, that the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ could alone have inspired you with the desire to distribute the Sacred Scriptures to those who are disposed to make a holy use of them, we hope and believe, that the Divine Saviour *will* be himself your recompense; and that he will *give* to you, as well as to all of us, the grace to understand, and to seek a part in his second coming: for this ought to be our only and constant desire, in the times of darkness and tribulation in which we live.

"It is with this view, Sir, that I entreat you to have the goodness to send six more copies of the sacred volume for several of my friends, who are delighted, not only with the beauty of the type, but especially with the purity of the edition; for it is sufficient to see the name of Monsieur le Maitre de Sacy, to be assured that this edition is strictly conformable to the sacred text. Sir, as the persons who have charged me to entreat you to send six more copies of the New Testament would be sorry to abuse your generosity, they also charge me to say, that if you accomplish their wishes, as your truly Christian kindness induces them to hope, and will mark the price on the books, they shall feel it to be a pleasure and duty to remit you the amount when I acknowledge the arrival of the parcel. Could you also add six copies of the little Tract, entitled '*Les Deux Viellards?*' (The Two Old Men.)

"I entreat you, Sir, to excuse the liberty I have taken, and to believe that, while life remains, I am, in the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ,

"Your very humble servant,

"THE WIDOW ———."

The reception of this letter revived in M. —— that lively interest which he had been constrained to feel for the prosperity of these happy villagers. Often had he called to mind the Christian kindness with which they received him, and often had he presented his ardent prayer to the God of grace, that he who "had begun a good work in them," would carry it on to "the day of Jesus Christ."

Instead of complying with the request of this venerable woman to send her six copies of the New Testament, he sent her twenty, authorizing her to sell them to such as were able to pay; but to present them, at her own discretion, to those who were desirous of obtaining them, and had not the means to purchase, "without money and without price." With these he also presented to the widow, as a mark of his Christian affection, a Bible for her own use, together with a dozen copies of the Tract which she had requested, and several other religious books. In acknowledging this unexpected bounty, she thus replied, in a letter, dated July 17, 1821:—

"Respected Friend and Brother in our Lord Jesus Christ—It is impossible to describe the satisfaction that my heart experienced on the arrival of the kind communications which you have been pleased to send me. I could not help reading over and over again the letters enclosed, which afford fresh proof of the desire of yourself and your friends to contribute to the advancement of the reign of the Divine Redeemer. I cannot find words to express the happiness I have derived from perusing the entire copy of the Old and New Testament, which you beg me to accept as an expression of your Christian affection. I was more gratified and edified by this mark of your regard, as it was my intention to have requested, in my last letter, some copies of the Old Testament; but I dared not execute my design, for fear of abusing your Christian kindness and charity. The Old and New Testament, properly understood, are but one Testament; such is the connexion of the sacred books—for the New Testament is the key to the Old, and the Old the same to the New. In innumerable passages of the Old Testament, the birth, death, and glory of our Divine Redeemer are announced, in terms more or less distinct. In reading the prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah, we perceive that those

prophets spoke of our Saviour almost as though they had lived with him on the earth. His second coming is also foretold in many passages, especially in the prophecies of Ezekiel and Daniel.

"The box which your Christian generosity has sent, has excited universal joy in the hearts of all our friends in this district. Immediately after they learned the agreeable news, they flocked to see me, and to have the happiness and advantage of procuring the Testament of our Redeemer; and in less than *five days* the box was emptied. I gave copies of the Gospel of St. Matthew to those who had not the satisfaction and consolation to procure a complete copy of the Testament. The whole was so soon distributed that many could have nothing; and there are also many who do not yet know of the arrival of the second box. I intend to lend the copy of the Bible, and of the books which I have reserved for myself, among our friends in the neighbourhood, in order that the books we have may be as useful as possible.

"As I hope you will do me the honour and the Christian kindness to acknowledge the receipt of this, I request you to inform me how I can remit you sixty francs, which I have received for fifteen of the New Testaments. As our brethren and sisters in Jesus Christ, who, by an effect of his grace altogether free and unmerited, look for his second coming to salvation, are delighted and edified by the truly Christian salutation which you have sent through me; they desire me to express their gratitude, and to request you to accept theirs in the same spirit. I unite with them in beseeching you and your respectable friend ——, and all your friends, not to forget us in your prayers to the Father of Lights, that he may give us grace to persevere in the same sentiments, and grant us all the mercy to join the general assembly, the heavenly Jerusalem. Amen. Expecting that happy day, I entreat you to believe me your very humble servant and friend in Jesus Christ,

"The Widow ——."

It may well be supposed, that the reception of this interesting letter produced an effect on the mind of M. ——, as well as on the minds of many of his Christian friends at Paris, of the happiest kind. M. —— informed the widow

of the great satisfaction with which he had learned the eagerness of the villagers to obtain the word of God, and that he had directed his friend, the publisher of the New Testament of De Sacy, to send her fifty copies more; at the same time promising her a fresh supply, if they should be needed. He also expressed to her the hope, that, as he expected his business would, within a few months, call him again to S——, he should be able, Providence permitting, to avail himself of that opportunity and enjoy the happiness of another visit at her residence. To this communication she some time afterwards returned the following reply:

"Dear Sir, and Brother in our Lord Jesus Christ—May the grace and unmerited mercy of our Divine Saviour be our single and only hope in our pilgrimage here below. I beseech you and your dear friends to pray for us, that the celestial Comforter, promised in the Scriptures, would vouchsafe to visit our hearts and warm them with his love; for without the aid of this Divine Light, even though we should commit to memory the Old and New Testament, it would avail us nothing; but rather tend to our greater condemnation in the sight of our Sovereign Judge.

"I am now able to acknowledge the receipt of the box which you had the goodness and Christian charity to send me, containing fifty copies of the Testament of our blessed Saviour, which did not arrive until the 25th of last month, on account of its having been detained in the public store at S—— for several days, without my knowledge. As soon as I learned it was there, I sent one of my daughters to inquire for it, as I was then so ill as to keep my bed, and to induce a belief that I was about to quit this land of exile. I have felt myself so much better for a few days past, that I begin to think that my pilgrimage will be prolonged for some time, and that I may yet have the pleasure and consolation of again seeing you, and conversing with you upon the things which regard our eternal peace. It is with such feelings that I would beg an interest in your prayers, that the precious blood which the Divine Saviour has been willing to shed for us and other sinners, may be found efficacious to me in that moment when I shall depart from this vale of tears for my age admonishes that

this time is not far distant. Believe me, my dear brother in Christ, that I shall never forget you in my prayers, however feeble they may be; for I can never forget the day when, urged by Christian friendship, you entered my house, and imparted that truly spiritual nourishment which serves for time and eternity, and we discoursed together upon the second coming of our Divine Redeemer, and the restoration of the covenant people.

"I look forward to the happy moment when I shall have the honour and pleasure of seeing you again; and in the mean time beg you to believe me your very humble and affectionate friend and servant in Jesus Christ,

"The Widow ——."

In a letter received soon after the above, M. —— was informed, that the Bibles and Testaments had all been disposed of within *two days* from the time of their arrival, and that many, who earnestly desired a copy, were yet unsupplied: the distribution having only created an increased demand. M. —— resolved not to neglect their wants, as long as it was in his power to supply them; and the day being not far distant, when he proposed to repair to S——, and to make a second visit to the Village in the Mountains, he prepared a case of a hundred New Testaments and a hundred octavo Bibles, which he forwarded to Lyons by the *roulage accelerè*, or baggage wagon, to meet his arrival there; and soon after took his departure from Paris.

There were some interesting incidents in the progress of this tour, which so delightfully point to the hand of God, that the reader may be gratified in becoming acquainted with them. On his arrival at Lyons, M. ——, finding no other way of transportation except the common *Diligence*, a public stage coach, was obliged to resort to this conveyance. The case of Bibles and Testaments which he had forwarded was so large, that the only method by which it could be carried was to set it up on end in the basket attached to the back of the Diligence; and such was the weight and size of the box, that it was with no small difficulty, and by the assistance of several men, that it was safely adjusted. At first the passengers objected to taking their seats with such a weight behind, lest

they should meet with some accident, or be impeded in their progress. After much persuasion, however, and after presenting a number of Religious Tracts to each passenger, and requesting the conductor to drive slow, they were prevailed on to proceed on their journey. The course they were pursuing led through a part of the country solely inhabited by *Roman Catholics*, where, the year before, M. —— had distributed a number of Bibles and Tracts, the reading of which, he had subsequently ascertained, had been forbidden by the Priests, who had not only demanded them, but consigned most or all of them to the flames. M. —— thought necessary, in this journey, to suspend his distributions in this immediate vicinity. But the Providence of God had other views, and so ordered it, that, without the instrumentality of men, the sacred records should be scattered among that people. On reaching the place of his destination at the foot of the mountains, and alighting from the Diligence, M. —— discovered, that the case had opened at the top, and that not a few Bibles and Testaments had been scattered along the way. Travellers were soon seen coming up, some in wagons, and some on horseback, some with a Bible and some with a New Testament under their arm. They informed him, that, for eight or ten miles back, the inhabitants had been supplied by the Diligence, as the books had fallen out whenever they descended a hill, or travelled over rocky and uneven ground.

While taking the case from the Diligence, several more persons came up, each bringing his Bible or Testament, which they most readily offered to return to M. ——, but which he as cheerfully requested them to accept, observing to them, that they had been destined for their perusal by that Providence whose unseen hand directs all human events. Though ignorant of the contents of the volume which God had thus given them, they expressed many thanks to M. —— for his generosity, and were about to proceed on their way, apparently rejoicing, when M. —— dismissed them by saying: "My friends, I feel peculiarly happy in thus being the instrument of putting into your hands that volume which contains the records of eternal life, and which points you to 'the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' If you faithfully read

it, and imbibe its glorious and precious truths, and obey its precepts, it will render you happy in this life, and happy during the endless ages of eternity."

Having opened the case, M. —— found that forty-nine Bibles and Testaments had been thus distributed. Some of his fellow passengers were ready to believe that the box had been intentionally left open, but M. —— assured them, that it had been carefully secured in the usual manner, and that not until his arrival at the spot where they alighted, had he known that any had fallen out.

Having made arrangements to have the case forwarded to the widow, and having addressed to her a note informing her of his intention to proceed to the large village of S——, where he proposed tarrying a few days, during which time, he hoped once more to visit her and her friends. M. —— resumed his seat in the Diligence, and arrived at S—— the same night. On the next day but one after his arrival, he was agreeably surprised, at an early hour in the morning, to find the hotel where he lodged, surrounded by fifty or sixty persons, inquiring for the gentleman who had, a day or two before, presented to a number of their citizens THE BOOK, which, as they said, "contained a true history of the birth, life, sufferings, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Others of them called it by its proper name, the New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. All of them were anxious to purchase a copy of it. As soon as M. —— ascertained the object of their visit, he appeared on the balcony, and expressed his regret, that he had no more of those interesting volumes with him; informing them that, if it pleased God he should return to Paris, he would forward a hundred to his correspondent in that place, that each of them might be furnished with a copy. This was accordingly done immediately after his return to Paris. And during his residence there, M. —— had the satisfaction to see, that more or less individuals from S——, who came to solicit orders for their manufacturing establishments, also brought orders for an additional supply of the Sacred Volume. And the number of Bibles and Testaments which were introduced into a dense Catholic population, in consequence of the apparently trivial circumstance of the opening of the case in the Dili-

gence, will probably never be ascertained until the great day of account; nor will it be known to what extent they have been instrumental in reclaiming and saving the souls of deluded men.

On the day following, M. —— received a deputation from the Village in the Mountains, anxiously desiring to hear on what day and hour they might hope to enjoy his long-expected visit. He proposed to be at the widow's house the following morning, at 11 o'clock. Furnished with a carriage and horses by one of his friends, he set out accordingly; and, on reaching the foot of the mountain, was met by a deputation of twelve or fifteen of these faithful followers of the Lamb, who greeted his approach with demonstrations of joy. He immediately descended from the carriage, and was conducted to the house of the widow with every expression of the most sincere Christian affection, some taking him by the sleeve, and others by the skirts of his coat, some preceding and others following him. But what was his surprise, on arriving at the house, to find an assembly of from sixty to eighty, who, with one voice, desired him to *preach* to them! M. —— observed to them, that he was an unworthy layman, and totally unqualified for such a responsible duty, and the more so at that time, as his mind had been occupied in his secular business; and he felt the need of himself receiving instruction, instead of attempting to impart it to others. But a chair had been placed for him in a suitable part of the room, and a small table, covered with a green cloth, placed before it, on which was laid the copy of the Bible which M. —— had, some months before, presented to the widow. M. —— saw he could not avoid saying something to this importunate company, and looking to God for assistance and a blessing, took the chair which had been set for him, and resolved to attempt to draw from the Bible, for their benefit, such instruction and consolation as he might be enabled to impart.

To the eye of M.—— every thing gave beauty and solemnity to this unexpected scene. The room into which he was conducted was filled with the villagers, all conveniently accommodated on benches. A large door opened in the rear of the house, and discovered the declivity of the mountain on which it stood, skirted also with listening

auditors. While, at a distance, the flocks and herds were peacefully feeding, the trees, covered with beautiful foliage, were waving in the breeze, and all nature seemed to be in harmony with those sacred emotions which so obviously pervaded this rural assembly.

After addressing the throne of grace, M. —— read a part of the fourth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. He turned their attention more especially to that interesting passage in the twelfth verse: "*There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved.*" He endeavoured to point out to them the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the awful consequences of violating the law of God, the inefficacy of all those expedients which the ignorance, the pride, or the self-righteousness of men had substituted for the "only name" Christ Jesus. He spoke of the necessity of this great sacrifice on the cross, of the love of God in sending his Son into the world, of the fullness and all-sufficiency of the mighty redemption, and of the duty of sinners to accept it and live. "It is through Christ alone," said he, "that you can have hope of pardon and salvation. You must take up the cross and follow Christ. You must renounce your sins and flee to Christ. You must renounce your own righteousness, and trust alone in Christ. You must renounce all other lords and submit to Christ. If you had offended an earthly monarch, to whom you could have access only through his son, would you address yourselves to his *servants*, rather than his *son?* And will you then, in the great concerns of your souls, go to any other than the *Son?* Will you have recourse to the *Virgin Mary*, or some favoured *servant*, rather than address yourselves to Him who is 'the way, and the truth, and the life?' and when God himself assures us, that '*there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved?*'"

Having thus proceeded for the space of fifteen or twenty minutes, and at a moment when the greater part of his audience were in tears, the widow suddenly came running to M. ——, saying, with great agitation, "*Monseur! Monseur!*" "What, madam, what?" said M. ——. "I perceive," said she, "at a distance, the Deputy Mayor of a neighbouring village, in company with several women, approaching with a speedy step towards my house. These

people are among our greatest persecutors—shall I not call in our little band of brothers and sisters, and fasten the doors?" "No, madam," said M. ——, "on the contrary, if it be possible, open the doors still wider; trust in God our Saviour, and leave to me the direction of this matter."

By this time, considerable alarm seemed to pervade the whole assembly, and some confusion ensued, in consequence of several leaving their seats. M. —— begged them to be composed, and to resume their seats, saying, that the object for which they were assembled was one which God would accept of and approve, which angels would delight in, and at which Satan trembled; and that they had nothing to fear from the arm of flesh. By this time, the Mayor made his appearance at the threshold of the door, together with his attendants. "Come in, Sir," said M. —— "and be seated," pointing to a chair placed near the table. "No, Sir," said he, "I prefer to remain here." "But I prefer," said M. —— "that you come in, and also your companions, and be seated." Perceiving M. —— to be firm in his determination, they complied, and were all seated among his nearest auditors.

M. —— then, without any further remarks, having the Bible open before him, directed their attention to those words in Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven; for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*" Matt. v. 10, 12.

M. —— proceeded to set before them the sufferings of the apostles and primitive Christians for the truth as it is in Jesus, and the constancy and firmness with which, in all circumstances, they endured these sufferings, on account of the love which they bore to their Saviour; that they had good reasons for so doing, for they were assured by Christ, in the words just read, that "great should be their reward in heaven." M. —— then proceeded to show the immense responsibility which those assumed, and the enormity of their guilt, who, ignorantly or designedly, persecuted the followers of Christ. That they were but "heaping up to themselves wrath against the day of

wrath." That the day was not far distant, when the awful realities of eternity would burst upon their view; and that every man would then be judged "according to the deeds done in the body."

When M. —— had proceeded in this manner for ten or twelve minutes, bringing the truth to bear especially upon the minds of his new audience, he perceived the Mayor wiping his eyes with the cuff of his sleeve, who, rising at that moment from his seat, exclaimed:

"Sir, I acknowledge that I have heretofore felt an enmity towards many of the people whom I here see before me; and have, as far as my influence extended, in my official capacity, endeavoured to break up what I have considered their illegal assemblies, and to coerce them back within the pale of the mother church, which one after another of them have been abandoning for years past. But if all that you have expressed be true, and is in conformity with the sacred volume of God's word, and if the book which you hold in your hand is a correct translation of the original copy, I beg you to sell it me, that I may peruse it myself, and give the reading of it to others better able to judge of its contents: and if I there find the promises and threatenings as stated by you to be correct, you may rely upon it, that, so far from persecuting these in other respects harmless people, I will hereafter be their friend."

On hearing this, M. —— immediately requested the widow to bring several Bibles from the case which he brought with him in the Diligence, and which had reached the house according to his direction; one of which he presented to the Mayor, and one to each of his Catholic associates. On the Mayor's offering pay for the one put into his hand, M. —— observed, that he had much pleasure in presenting it to him, as well as to his companions, in the hope that they would hereafter not only become the friends of this interesting people, but, what was of more importance, the friends of Jesus Christ, who is the "*only* Mediator between God and man." With this they took their departure: M. —— observing to them, that his heart's desire and prayer to God was, that, by a careful, humble, and prayerful perusal of that sacred volume, their understandings might become enlightened, and their hearts imbued with the riches of divine grace; that they might

thereby be led hereafter to advocate the very cause which they had hitherto been attempting to destroy; and that, when they had done serving God their Saviour here below, they might find themselves among that happy number "whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life." They left the house, all of them in tears, and as it appeared, deeply impressed with the truths which had been exhibited.

After he had concluded these remarks, M. —— requested that some of the remaining Bibles and Testaments might be brought and laid before him on the table. These he distributed gratuitously to all present who had not before been supplied, and who were unable to purchase them. While he was doing this, many who had previously received the sacred volume, came forward, and manifested their gratitude by laying upon the table their various donations of from two to ten francs* each, till, in a few moments, the table was well nigh covered. M. —— told them he was unwilling to receive money in that manner, and wished them to put their gifts into the hands of the widow, accompanied by the names of the donors, that they might be regularly accounted to the Bible Society. This they consented to with some reluctance, when the widow brought from her drawer a purse containing a hundred and seventy francs, saying to M. ——, that he could not refuse that money, as it was the proceeds of Bibles and Testaments which she had sold in compliance with his directions. M. —— replied to her, that he had indeed requested her to sell these volumes to such as were able to purchase, that he might ascertain whether there were persons in that neighbourhood, who sufficiently appreciated the word of God to be willing to pay for it; but, that object having been accomplished, it was now his privilege, on his own personal responsibility, to place the hundred and seventy francs in the hands of the widow, to be distributed, in equal portions, to the three unfortunate families whom they had mentioned as having recently lost their husbands and fathers by the caving in of a coal pit.

On hearing this, they together, spontaneously as it were, surrounded M. ——, and with tears streaming from their eyes, loaded him with their expressions of gratitude and

* Five francs are nearly equal to one dollar.

their blessings, rendering it the most touching scene which M. —— ever witnessed.

Amidst all these tokens of their Christian affection, M. —— was compelled to prepare for his departure, and imploring the richest of heaven's mercies upon their heads, bade them an affectionate farewell.

The whole company followed him to the carriage, and just as he had reached it, he once more addressed them, saying, "My dear friends, if any of you have not yet submitted yourselves to God, and are out of the ark of safety, I beseech you, 'give not sleep to your eyes nor slumber to your eyelids,' until you flee to the Saviour. And those of you who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, live near to God, bear cheerfully the cross of your Redeemer, follow on to know the Lord and do his will, and by his grace reigning in your hearts, you shall come off conquerors, and more than conquerors!" When he had said this, and had again commended them to the God of all mercy through a crucified Redeemer, he drove off, amid their prayers and blessings, to see them no more till that day, when they shall meet in the kingdom of their Father, where sighs and farewells are sounds unknown, and where God shall wipe away all tears from every eye.

After M. ——'s return to Paris, he had the pleasure to learn from the widow, that all the Bibles he had left with her were disposed of, and that many, in various directions from the village, were earnest to obtain them, but could not be supplied. In the mean time a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of these villagers had diffused itself beyond the limits of Paris, or even of France. The first eight pages of this Tract, having found its way to England, had been published by the Religious Tract Society of London, and had obtained a very wide circulation. A parish in one of the interior towns of England had forwarded to M. —— twenty pounds sterling, for the purchase of Bibles to be presented to the widow for gratuitous distribution; and a family of Friends from Wales, having read the narrative, visited M. —— at Paris, and proceeded thence to the Village in the Mountains, where they tarried no less than three weeks, assuring M. ——, on their return to Paris, that it had been the most interesting three weeks of their lives.

As the proceeds of the twenty pounds, M. —— forwarded

to the widow fifty Bibles and fifty Testaments, with a selection of several other choice books and Tracts. These Bibles, Testaments, and Tracts, were all actually disposed of in *eight days*, of which the widow gave early information, accompanied by letters to M. ——, and to the benevolent donors in England, expressing, in the most cordial manner, her gratitude, and that of those who had thus been supplied with the word of life. She gave a particular statement of the eagerness with which they had been read, of their distribution in many Catholic families, and the conversion of some to the truth as it is in Jesus. She informed that many individuals and families were still unsupplied; and for herself and those around her, expressed her thanksgivings to God for the wonders of his love in inspiring the hearts of his children to unite their efforts in Bible and other Benevolent Institutions, and to contribute of their substance to extend to the destitute a knowledge of the Gospel.

The last letter which M. —— received from the widow, before he left the country, contained two hundred francs, which she and her children had contributed as a donation, in acknowledgment of the Bibles and Testaments which he had from time to time forwarded.

M. —— replied to her, that it gave him more joy than to have received twenty thousand francs from another source, as it testified their attachment to the word of God. He returned her the full amount of their donation in Bibles, with two hundred and fifty Testaments from the Society, together with fifty from himself as his last present before his departure, and also six hundred Tracts and several other religious books. Pointing out to her an esteemed friend in Paris, to whom, if further supplies should be needed, she might apply with assurance that her requests would be faithfully regarded, and exhorting her to remain steadfast in the faith, and to fix her eye always upon the Saviour, M. —— commended her to God, in the fervent hope, that, through the unsearchable riches of his grace, he should hereafter meet her and her persecuted associates, in that world, where "the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest."

NOTE.—The original letters of the widow, in French, are deposited in the archives of the American Tract Society.

No. 29

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE SWEARER'S PRAYER,

OR, HIS OATH EXPLAINED.

WHAT, a swearer pray! Yes, Swearer, whether thou thinkest so or not, each of thine oaths is a prayer—an appeal to the Holy and Almighty God, whose name thou darest so impiously to take into thy lips.

And what is it, thinkest thou, Swearer, that thou dost call for, when the awful imprecations, *Damn* and *Damnation*, roll so frequently from thy profane tongue? Tremble, Swearer, while I tell thee! Thy prayer containeth two parts: Thou prayest, first, that thou mayest be deprived of eternal happiness! Secondly, that thou mayest be plunged into eternal misery.

When, therefore, thou callest for damnation, dost thou not, in effect, say as follows? "O God! thou hast power to punish me in hell forever: therefore, let not one of my sins be forgiven! Let every oath that I have sworn—every lie that I have told—every Sabbath that I have broken, and all the sins that I have committed, either in thought, word or deed, rise up in judgment against me, and eternally condemn me! Let me never partake of thy salvation! May my soul and body be deprived of all happiness, both in this world and that which is to come! Let me never see thy face with comfort—never enjoy thy favour and friendship; and let me never enter into the kingdom of heaven!"

This is the first part of thy prayer—Let us hear the second.

"O God, let me not only be shut out of heaven, but also shut up in hell! May all the members of my body be tortured with inconceivable agony, and all the powers of my soul tormented with horror and despair, inexpressible and eternal! Let my dwelling be in the blackness of darkness, and my companions accursed men and accursed devils! Pour down thy hottest anger; execute all thy wrath and curse upon me; arm and send forth all thy terrors against me; and let thy fierce, thy fiery, thy fearful indignation, rest upon me! Be mine eternal enemy, and plague, and punish, and torment me, in hell, forever, and ever, and ever!!!"

Swearer, *this is thy prayer!!!* O dreadful imprecation! O horrible, horrible, most horrible! Blaspheming man! Dost thou like thy petition? Look at it. Art thou sincere in thy prayer, or art thou *mocking* thy Maker? Dost thou wish for damnation? Art thou desirous of eternal torment? If so, swear on—swear hard.—The more oaths, the more misery; and, perhaps, the sooner thou mayest be in hell. Art thou *shocked* at this language? Does it harrow up thy soul? Does thy very blood run cold in thy veins? Art thou convinced of the evil of profane swearing? How many times hast thou blasphemed the God of Heaven? How many times hast thou asked God to damn thee, in the course of a year, a month, a day? Nay, how many times in a single hour, hast thou called for damnation? Art thou not yet in hell? Wonder, O Heavens, and be astonished, O earth, at the goodness and long-suffering of that God, whose great name swearing persons so often and so awfully profane! Swearer be thankful, O be exceedingly thankful, that God has not answered thy prayer; thy *tremendous* prayer; that his mercy and patience have withholden the request of thy polluted lips! Never let him hear another oath from thy unhallowed tongue, lest it should be thy last expression upon earth, and thy swearing prayer should be answered in hell. O let thine oaths be turned into supplications! Repent. and turn to Jesus, who died for swearers, as well as for murderers. And then, O! then (though thou mayest have sworn as many oaths as there are "stars in the heaven, and sands upon the sea-shore innumerable,") then thou shalt find to thy eternal joy, that there is love enough in his heart, and merit sufficient in his blood, to pardon thy sins, and save thy soul for ever..... Swearer! Canst thou ever again blaspheme such a God and Saviour as this? Does not thy conscience cry—God *forbid!* Even so, Amen.

THE PRAYER ANSWERED,

In the following, among multitudes of other instances.

In November, 1786, a person much given to swearing, being disappointed by one of his companions not returning to the public-house as soon as he expected, *swore* he would never drink with him again, and that if he did, it should be his *last*. Accordingly, that day *was* his last. God took him at his word, and thus called him into eternity.

In November, 1787, one W—rs, a smith, spending the evening at a public-house, in Leather-lane, quarrelled with one of his companions, and while *swearing* the most horrid oaths, God struck him instantaneously dead, with an oath on his lips, upon the bench where he was sitting. The jury who sat upon the body, after hearing all the circumstances of the case, brought in their verdict, that *W—rs was struck dead as a judgment from God.* This narration was given by the foreman of the jury.

Another remarkable judgment overtook a person living in Brewer-street, Soho, who, cursing and swearing in a most dreadful manner, was struck speechless, and died the same afternoon. Wills's Register.

T. G. who lived in the parish of Sedgeley, near Wolverhampton, having lost a considerable sum by cock-fighting, to which practice he was notoriously addicted, swore in a most horrid manner, that he would never fight another cock, frequently calling upon God to damn his soul to all eternity if he did; and with dreadful imprecations, wishing the devil might fetch him, if ever he made another bet.

His resolutions, thus impiously formed, was for a while observed; but about two years afterwards, Satan, whose willing servant he continued to be, inspired him with a violent desire to attend a cocking at Wolverhampton, and he complied with the temptation. He there stood up, and cried, I hold four to three on such a cock. "Four what?" said one of his companions in iniquity. "Four shillings," replied he. Upon which the wager was confirmed, and he, putting his hand into his pocket for the money, *instantly fell a ghastly corpse on the ground.* Evan. Magaz.

From a Minister in the Scilly Islands.

TRESCO, DECEMBER 6TH, 1816.

A child who came to the Sunday School, a shockingly depraved little creature, continued to swear for several weeks after her admission. I gave her several Tracts, among which was THE SWEARER'S PRAYER. She took them home, when her father inquired, "What have you got there—what are they about?" The child said, "You must not swear any more, father—nor you, grandfather, for that book tells of men that were killed for swearing." The wretched old man burst into a violent fit of laughter, at the same time swearing that the book should not be read

in his hearing. The child's father, however, read the Tract, and the Lord mercifully caused it to reach his heart; the next Lord's day he went to the public worship of God, which was rendered useful to him. This excited the enmity of the old man against his son and myself, to a degree scarcely to be equalled by the most hardened sinner: he lived only fifteen days after his son's conversion, which were spent in awful blasphemy against God and his saints. His death was remarkable. He went out into the fields, in the morning, to bind sheaves of corn, where he met with one of his sinful associates, who joined him in ridiculing and abusing the converted Baptist, as they termed his son; while thus engaged, the aged sinner fell against the hedge a ghastly corpse! I made a few remarks near the coffin, which the Holy Spirit appeared to apply to the hearts of the child, the mother, and the neighbour above-mentioned. Tracts are very useful here: THE DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER has been blessed in *four* instances. Since I have been on this island, many have believed, through grace, to the salvation of their souls."

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Exod. xx. 7.

Because of swearing the land mourneth. Jer. xxxii. 10.

Every one that sweareth shall be cut off. Zec. v. 3.

Dear reader, art thou a Swearer? O take this friendly warning; the next oath may be thy last; if thy prayer is heard, thy soul is damned forever!!!

Who hath hardened himself against God and prospered? Job ix. 4.

In the county of Greene, [N. Y.] an instance lately occurred of the good effect of this Tract on [at least] the external conduct of *a company of travellers*, who disturbed the peace of the house at which they had put up, by an incessant use of bad language. The landlady proposed to her husband to take THE SWEARER'S PRAYER into their room and read it to them. He did so, and the loud torrent of blasphemy was immediately stayed. This example deserves imitation.

№ 30

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

ACCOUNT OF THE

DEATH OF AN INFIDEL.

AT sixteen he was sent to the University of ———, where he continued five years, and behaved so agreeable to his religious education, that he was looked upon as a blessing and ornament to his family. At twenty-one he entered himself at ———, to study the law. His new acquaintance began to rally him for his religion; to whom he would say, "Gentlemen, you who pretend to reason cannot think laughter a conclusive argument. If religion is so absurd as you would have me believe, why don't you give some fair reasons against it?" This some of them would attempt; and though their arguments were at first unsuccessful, the poison sunk in by degrees, and at last tainted him as deeply as themselves. He was adopted into their society, which met to lay down rules for being so critically wicked, that the law should not be able to take hold of them.

At length he was taken ill, and found (notwithstanding all his precautions) he had not yet shook off the expectation of another life. This made him throw himself upon his bed, and break into these expressions. "Whence this war in my breast? What argument is there now to assist me against matter of fact? Do I assert there is no hell, while I feel it in my own bosom? Am I certain there is no future retribution, when I feel a present judgment? Do I affirm my soul to be as mortal as my body, when the body languishes, and the soul remains vigorous as ever? Wretch that I am, whither shall I flee from this breast? What will become of me?"

One of his old companions coming in, said, "How now,

brother? Why this melancholy look and posture? What's the matter?" "The matter!" replied he; "It is you and your companions have instilled your principles in me, which now, when I have most need of them, leave me in confusion and despair: what comfort have you to fortify me against the fearful expectations of another life? Are you certain the soul is material and mortal, and that it will dissolve with the body?" "So certain," replied the other, "that I venture my whole upon it." Here I interrupted them by coming into the room, and applying myself to the sick person, told him that I was a stranger to him, but hearing of his illness, I thought it my duty to offer him what service I was capable of. "I thank you," said he, "and would desire you to engage that gentleman, who sits there, and prove to him that the soul is not matter, nor mortal."

That, said I, is easily proved; matter is universally allowed to be indifferent to motion or rest; that if it be in rest, it will rest to all eternity, unless something else move it; and if it be in motion, it will eternally move, unless something else stop it. Now, you who think the soul matter, say, that it first moves the animal spirits, they the nerves, and these the limbs; but to say this, is to say that matter moves itself, which is absurd, and contrary to the maxim just mentioned; therefore, the soul is not matter, and consequently not liable to be dissolved as is matter.

The sick gentleman answered only with a groan, whilst his friend hastened out of the room. I was surprised at such an effect, and desired to know the reason of his discontent. "Alas! Sir," said he, "you have undeceived me, now it is too late. I was afraid of nothing so much as the immortality of the soul; now you have assured me of that, you have assured me of hell. You have now sealed my damnation, by giving me an earnest of it; I mean an awakened conscience, that brings my sins into remembrance by reckoning up the numerous catalogue for which I must go and give an account. Oh! apostate wretch, from what hopes art thou fallen!"

I stood speechless some time at these expressions, but as soon as I could recollect myself, said, "Sir, I would desire you to take care how you violate the mercies of God, and think so slight of the sufferings of Christ, as if

they were not sufficient for the redemption of the greatest sinners. This may be a delusion of the devil. If you are convinced the soul is immortal, I hope it is to a good end. If you had died ignorant of it, you had been miserably undeceived in another world; now you have some time to prepare for your welfare." To which he replied, "As to the mercies of God in Christ, I once knew and tasted what they are, which is now past, to my curse, in that I am now sensible of my loss. They are, I grant you, sufficient for those who have any share in them: but what is that to me, who have denied Christ, who have daily crucified him afresh, and put him to an open shame? The devil has nothing to do with the torture I undergo. It is no delusion of his, but the just judgments of God; and your convictions are also part of my heavy judgment, in that you have given me a sensible horror of my sin, by proving my soul immortal. Had I gone straight to hell, in my old opinion, I had endured but one hell, whereas I now feel two. I mean not only an inexpressible torture, which I carry in my breast, but an expectation of I know not what change. O that I were in hell, that I might feel the worst! and yet I dread to die, because the worst will never have an end."

All this he spoke with so much earnestness, and such an air of horror, as is scarcely to be imagined. Before I took my leave, I desired to pray by him, to which, with much reluctance, he consented. During prayer, he groaned extremely, tossing himself as if he were in the agonies of death. When prayer was over, I asked him the reason of it. He answered, "as the damned in hell have their torments doubled—first, by reflecting on the misery they are in—and, secondly, by observing the happiness they have lost; so I, knowing myself to be hardened and sealed unto damnation, hearing the prayers of the righteous, to which God's ears are always open, this increases my torment to think how I am excluded from such a privilege, and have no other portion left me, than blaspheming, weeping, and gnashing of teeth for ever. 'Oh! it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!' If God was not against me, I should not value all the power and malice of man joined to engage me, though all the legions of hell contrived to torture me with the

most consuming pains; but when an irreconcilable God looks down upon his creature in wrath, and consigns him over to eternal vengeance, this is intolerable! inexpressible! Ah! who can dwell with everlasting burnings! O ye that have any hope, that have not yet passed your day of grace, cry mightily to God day and night! think no labour too much to secure you from the wrath of God! Oh! who can stand before him when he is angry? What stubble can resist that consuming fire?"

This, and more to the same purpose, he spoke with so deep a concern, the tears all the while trickling down his cheeks, that no one in the room could forbear weeping, which he perceiving, said, "And can you weep at the image, and the mere relation of the effects of God's wrath? What then do I suffer, who actually lie under the very weight of his fury? Refrain your tears; pity is no debt to me; nothing is so proper for me, as some curse to complete my misery, and free me from the torments of expectation." Here he paused a little; then looking towards the fire, he said, "Oh that I was to lie and broil upon that fire an hundred thousand years, to purchase the favour of God, and be reconciled to him; but it is a fruitless wish,—millions of millions of years will bring me no nearer to the end of my torments, than one poor hour. O eternity! eternity! Who can properly paraphrase on the words, *Forever and ever?*"

At another time, several of his friends from the country, having had an account of his circumstances, came to visit him. One of them told him, that he and several more of his relations came to town on purpose to see him, and were sorry to find him in so weak a condition as his appearance indicated. He answered, "I am obliged in common civility to thank you all: but who are my relations? I may properly say, that none but the atheist, the reprobate, and all such as do the work of the devil, are my relations. This little lie of flesh and blood will dissolve in a moment; but the relation I have to the damned is permanent. The same lot, the same place of torment, the same exercises of blasphemy, and the same eternity of horror, will be common to us all." His friends, who had heard that he was distracted, hearing him deliver himself in such terms, were amazed, and began to inquire, what

made him talk in such a strain. He hearing them whispering together, and imagining the cause, said, "You imagine me melancholy or distracted—I wish I were either; but it is a part of my judgment that I am not: no, my apprehension of persons and things is rather more quick and vigorous than it was when I was in perfect health. Would you be informed why I am become a skeleton in three or four days? Know then, I have despised my maker, and denied the redeemer——I have joined myself to the atheist and profane, and continued this course under many convictions, till my iniquity was ripe for vengeance, and the just judgments of God overtook me, when my security was the greatest, and the checks of my conscience the least. Since I have denied that salvation which cometh by Christ Jesus, there is no other mediation or intercession for sinners: if there be, who is he that can redeem my soul from hell, or give a ransom for my life? There remains no more sacrifice for sin!—that is the wound that pierces my soul. There is no other name under heaven by which we may be saved, but the name of Jesus; and it is this Jesus I have reproached, ridiculed, and abused in his members—nay, to whom I have induced others to do the same. Methinks, your breasts are all open to me, and in the midst of your pity and surprise, you would bid me hope, believe, and supplicate the mercy I have abused. Alas! how fain would I hope and believe? Can a man in torments not desire to be freed from them? No, assure yourselves, I would on any terms: but the wrath of God obstructs the power of hoping and believing; and though I would, I can do neither. My hopes are frustrated—my expectations are cut off—and what remains? Why, I am bid to hope and believe. Oh, what mockery, to find me in misery, and bid me be happy, without affording me any power of being so! How idle is it to bid the fire not burn, when fuel is administered—to command the seas to be smooth and calm in the midst of storms? such is my case, and such the comfort of my friends. But I am spent, and can complain no more. Would to God the cause of my complainings would cease! The cause of my complainings! This again renews my griefs, and summons up the little strength I have left to complain again: like an extinguished flame, that re-collects at once

all its elementary matter for one great blaze before it expires. 'Tis just so with me. But whither am I going?"

My business calling me away for a day or two, I returned again on Thursday morning early. When I came in, I inquired of his friends how he spent his time. They informed me that he had seen but little company, and his expressions were shorter than usual; but what he did speak, seemed to have more horror and despair in it than before. I went to his bed-side and asked him how he did. He replied, "Damned and lost for ever." I observed to him that the decrees of God were secret; perhaps he was punished in this life to prepare him for a better. He answered, "they are not secret to me, but discovered, and my greatest torment. My punishment here is for an example to others, and an earnest to me of my own damnation. O that there was no God, or that this God could cease to be! for I am sure he will never have mercy upon me."—"Alas!" said I, "there is no contending with our Creator, and therefore forbear such words as may provoke him more." "True," he replied, "there is no contending: I wish there was a possibility of getting above God ——that would be a heaven to me!"—I entreated him not to give way to so blasphemous a thought, for ———. Here he interrupted me—"Read we not in the Revelations of those that blasphemed God because of their pains? I am now of that number." "But," replied I, "you are yet alive, and do not feel the torments of those that are in hell." He said, "this is either true or false—if it be true, how heavy will those torments be of which I do not yet feel the uttermost? But I know it is false, and that I now endure more than the spirits of the damned; for I have the very same torture upon my spirit that they have, besides those I endure in my body. I believe that at the day of judgment, the torments of my mind and body will both together be more intense; but as I now am, no spirit in hell endures what I do. How earnestly would I entreat my angry judge to send me thither, were I not afraid he would out of vengeance deny me!" Here he closed his eyes a little, and began to talk very wildly, every now and then groaning, and gnashing his teeth; but soon after, opening his eyes, he grew sensible again, and felt his own pulse, saying, "How lazy my minutes

go on! When will be the last breath, the last pulse, that shall beat my spirit out of this decayed mansion into the desired regions of death and hell! Oh the forlorn hope of him that has not God to go to!"—Here his speech failed him; we all believed him to be dying, and went to prayer, which threw him into an agony, in which, though he could not speak, he turned away his face, and made what noise he could to hinder himself from hearing. Perceiving this, we ceased. As soon as he could speak, which was not till after some time, he said, "Tygers and monsters, are ye also become devils to torment me, and give me a prospect of heaven to make my hell more intolerable?"—"Alas, Sir," said I, "it is our desire for your happiness, that casts us down at the throne of grace. If God denies assistance, who can give it? If he will not have mercy, whither must we go for it?" He replied "Aye, there is the wound! God is become my enemy, and there is none so strong as to deliver me out of his hands. He consigns me over to eternal vengeance, and none can redeem me." Having uttered a few sentences more, his voice failed again, and he began to struggle and gasp for breath, which having recovered, with a groan so dreadful and loud, as if he had been more than human, he cried out, "O the insufferable pangs of hell and damnation!" and expired!!!——

[From the Experienced Christian's Magazine, published in New-York in the year 1795.]

THE COMING OF CHRIST.

Every evening takes a day from the world's duration. Every clock that strikes, bids us recollect, that the promise of Christ has then received an additional force: "Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be." The precise day and hour knoweth no man. Though probably, as it was at his first advent, so likewise will it be at his second. The faithful servants, who are watching for the return of their Lord, and looking for redemption in Jeru-

salem, will be able, by the books of the Scriptures and the signs of the times, to tell when the day is approaching. But what avails a curious disquisition upon the exact period of the world's dissolution? What is likely to be the fate of those malefactors, who, instead of preparing for their trial, spend the small proportion of time allotted them, in disputing with each other concerning the hour in which the trumpet shall sound, and the Judge make his entry? In this, above all other cases, "blessed is the man that feareth always." "Blessed is that servant, who, whether his master cometh at the second watch, or whether he cometh at the third watch," is ready to receive him, and exhibit his accounts. Blessed, in short, is he, and he only, who hears continually these words of the beloved John, "BEHOLD HE COMETH!"

He cometh indeed! But how changed; how different his appearance from what it was! How shall we be able to conceive of it as it deserves; to raise our thoughts from the tender babe in the manger, bewailing our sins that brought him thither, to the voice of the Son of God, from which the heavens and the earth shall flee away, and no place be found for them any more for ever! Yet, so it is. Behold, he who came in swaddling clothes, cometh with clouds. He who came to preach the days of salvation, cometh again to proclaim the day of vengeance. He who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, leads his ten thousand to the prey, as the lion of the tribe of Judah. He who cried not, nor lifted up his voice against his enemies upon earth, thunders with the glorious voice of his excellency against them from heaven. He who never broke a bruised reed, rules the nations with a rod of iron, and breaks them in pieces like a potter's vessel. He who quenched not the smoking flax, extinguishes the great lights of the world; darkens the sun, and turns the moon into blood; commands the stars from their stations, and the dead from their graves; shakes the powers of heaven, and the foundations of the earth, and all hearts that are not fixed on him.

BISHOP HORNE.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

No. 31

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

LETTER

FROM A NOBLEMAN.

"Dear Sir,

"Before you receive this, my final state will be determined by the Judge of all the earth. In a few days at most, perhaps in a few hours, the inevitable sentence will be passed, that shall raise me to the heights of happiness, or sink me to the depths of misery. While you read these lines, I shall be either groaning under the agonies of absolute despair, or trembling in fulness of joy.

It is impossible for me to express the present disposition of my soul—the vast uncertainty I am struggling with! No words can paint the force and vivacity of my apprehensions. Every doubt wears the face of horror, and would perfectly overwhelm me, but for some faint beams of hope, which dart across the tremendous gloom! What tongue can utter the anguish of a soul suspended between the extremes of infinite joy and eternal misery? I am throwing my last stake for eternity, and tremble and shudder for the important event.

Good God! how have I employed myself! what enchantment hath led me? In what delirium hath my life been past? What have I been doing, while the sun in its race, and the stars in their courses, have lent their beams, perhaps only to light me to perdition?

I never awakened till now. I have but just commenced the dignity of a rational being. Till this instant, I had a wrong apprehension of every thing in nature. I have pursued shadows and entertained myself with dreams. I have been treasuring up dust, and sporting myself with the wind. I look back on my past life, and but for some memorials of guilt and infamy, it is all a blank—a perfect vacancy! I might have grazed with the beasts of the field, or sung with the winged inhabitants in the

woods, to much better purpose, than any for which I have lived. And oh! but for some faint hope, a thousand times more blessed had I been, to have slept with the clods of the valley, and never heard the Almighty's fiat, nor walked into life at his command!

I never had a just apprehension of the solemnity of the part I am to act until now. I have often met death insulting on the hostile plain, and, with a stupid boast, defied his terrors: with a courage as brutal as that of the warlike horse, I have rushed into the field of battle, laughed at the glittering spear, and rejoiced at the sound of the trumpet; nor had a thought of any state beyond the grave, nor the great tribunal to which I must have been summoned;

> "Where all my secret guilt had been revealed,
> Nor the minutest circumstance concealed."

It is this which arms death with all its terrors; else I could still mock at fear, and smile in the face of the gloomy monarch. It is not giving up my breath; it is not being forever insensible, that is the thought at which I shrink: it is the terrible hereafter, the something beyond the grave, at which I recoil. Those great realities, which, in the hours of mirth and vanity, I have treated as phantoms, as the idle dreams of superstitious beings; these start forth, and dare me now in their most terrible demonstration. My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance I have often defied.

To what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach? What extravagance is it to jest with death! to laugh at damnation! to sport with eternal chains, and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of infernal misery!

Were there no impiety in this kind of mirth, it would be as ill bred as to entertain a dying friend with the sight of a harlequin, or the rehearsal of a farce. Every thing in nature seems to reproach this levity in human creatures. The whole creation, man excepted, is serious: man, who has the highest reason to be so, while his affairs of infinite consequence are depending on this short uncertain duration. A condemned wretch may with as good a grace go dancing to his execution, as the greatest

part of mankind go on with such a thoughtless gayety to their grave.

Oh! with what horror do I recall those hours of vanity which we have wasted together! Return, ye lost neglected moments! How should I prize you above the eastern treasures! Let me dwell with hermits; let me rest on the cold earth; let me converse in cottages; may I but once more stand a candidate for an immortal crown, and have my probation for celestial happiness.

Ye vain grandeurs of a court! ye sounding titles, and perishing riches! what do ye now signify! what consolation, what relief can ye now give me? I have a splendid passage to the grave; I die in state, and languish under a gilded canopy; I am expiring on soft and downy pillows, and am respectfully attended by my servants and physicians: my dependents sigh, my sisters weep, my father bends beneath a load of years and grief; my lovely wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward anguish; my friend, who was as my own soul, suppresses his sighs, and leaves me to his secret grief. But, oh! who of these will answer my summons at the high tribunal? Who of them will bail me from the arrests of death? Who will descend into the dark prison of the grave for me? Here they all leave me, after having paid a few idle ceremonies to the breathless clay, which perhaps may lie disposed in state, while my soul, my only conscious part, may stand trembling before my judge.

My afflicted friends, it is very probable, with great solemnity, will lay the senseless corpse in a stately monument, inscribed with

Here lies the great ————

But could the pale carcase speak, it would soon reply:—

False marble, where?
Nothing but sordid dust lies here!

While some flattering panegyric is pronounced at my interment, I may perhaps be hearing my just condemnation at a superior tribunal; where an unerring verdict may sentence me to everlasting infamy. But I cast myself on his absolute mercy, through the infinite mercy of the Redeemer of lost mankind. Adieu, till we meet in the world of spirits."

THE SOUL OUT OF CHRIST.

What a destitute thing is the soul that is out of Christ. Destitute indeed! and the more so for being insensible of it. Would not you pity him, if you were to see a beggar lying in the streets, totally blind, with hardly rags to cover him, and ready to die of some dreadfully malignant distemper; if, in these melancholy circumstances, you should hear him boast of his large estate, and say, that he was rich, and increased in goods, and had need of nothing? Would not you pity him, as a man in a delirium, that knew not what he said, and perhaps would die before he felt his weakness? Equally pitiable, and a great deal more so, is that man who hath no part nor lot in the redemption purchased by Christ. He may affect a cheerful countenance and a light heart; he may make the world believe, yea, he may be so infatuated as to believe himself, that he is whole, and needs not a physician; that he is righteous, and needs not a Saviour; but he is in fact, and will at last appear to be, wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

Those who are out of Christ, have no pardon, no grace, no acceptance, no title to heaven; no, they are as destitute of all these blessings, as if Christ had never died to purchase them; and if they are without these things, what have they in their room? Why, they have guilt instead of pardon, bondage instead of freedom, frowns from God instead of acceptance, and terrifying fears of damnation instead of joy unspeakable and full of glory. What a pitiable case this! and yet, alas! this is the case of the greatest part of the world. Reader, are you afraid it is yours? Oh, be deeply humbled under a sense of it, and listen with eagerness and delight to the Saviour's gracious invitation, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see." Rev. iii. 18.—*From the unpublished writings of Lavington.*

No. 32

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE HISTORY

OF

JOHN WILDON.

JOHN WILDON'S *parents* were extremely poor, and though very industrious people, never had a single guinea which they could call their own. But they were really religious people, and were content with such things as they had. They lived daily in the fear of God, and heard his word on the Sabbath. They always had what they accounted enough, but they had nothing to spare. Both these good people, however, were taken suddenly away from their infant family by a putrid fever, and the children were put into the poor-house.

John was apprenticed by the parish to a brickmaker, and his master and the people that worked with him in the brickfield, were dreadfully wicked. They would swear and curse, as if there was no God to hear them, and awfully to punish them for their blasphemy. John's language and conduct, as he grew up, became like their's. He was, in some sense, greatly to be pitied, that he had none but ill examples before him in the field; but he was also greatly to be blamed, because when in the poor-house, there were some good people who would have taught him his duty toward God; he despised instruction, and was always found among the profane. He was a bad boy when he was bound apprentice, and he grew worse as he grew up to manhood. Although leading a very profligate life, he once pretended that he was reformed, in order to persuade a very neat and virtuous young woman, who lived in a village where he was at work, to marry him. She soon found, to her sorrow, what she might have expected

before, that her husband, instead of being her protector and friend, was, on the whole, a tyrant.

After poor Mary had spent eight long years the unhappy wife of John Wildon, a great noise was made in the village about setting up a *Sunday School.* Mrs. Bentley, the squire's lady, and Mrs. Turner, the minister's wife, and Miss Sealey, the lawyer's daughter, were like people who had forgotten their duty for twenty years, and were going, day after day, to every house in the parish, that they might begin to do what the ladies in London, and almost all the country over, had been doing, and recommending others to do. Somehow or other, the *printed accounts of the Society in London,* had got into the parish, and had been lent about to read. They soon formed a little Society, and determined to begin with opening a *Sunday School.* They called upon those who could afford it, for subscriptions, and upon *all* to persuade them to send their children to Mrs. Jenkins, the schoolmistress, on the next Sunday. They agreed to assist in teaching the children themselves, between the times of public service, and they wrote to a friend in London, and procured some books from the great Sunday School Society there, and thus they were prepared to do good, and without any very heavy expense.

The ladies I have mentioned called, of course, at John Wildon's cottage. They knew what a sad man he was; but, as they pitied his wife and the children, they spoke to her about the school, and told her what learning was to be given to the children that came to it, and said they hoped it might improve their manners, and better their condition. Mary was struck with the kindness of these women, and said she should be very glad to make them as clean as she could, and send them to school on Sunday; but as she did not know how her husband might take it, she could not promise any thing till she had talked with him about it. She said, however, that she hoped the ladies would believe, that if her children did not come, it was not her fault. In this she acted a very prudent part; and indeed, though but an ignorant woman, she was in general so discreet, that bad as John was, he doubtless behaved much better to her than he would have done, had she returned evil for evil, and railing for railing.

When John came home to supper, Mary, looking as cheerful as she could, said, I have some good news to tell you. Good news! replied John; what, have you contrived how the old children may nurse the young ones, so that you can come and help me in my task work, as other women do?—*that's* all the good news I want to hear. "Why, John," said his wife, "though I am but a weakly woman, yet if seven children did not want a great deal of looking after, I would as soon work hard out of doors as at home: but I am sure it is more for the credit of us both, even if I had no children, and had better health, if I could do a little washing or needle-work at home, and thus always keep the place tidy about us, and that you might have your meals ready and comfortable, and your room clean when you came from work. I'd do any thing that I could, so that we may but live happily. But the good news I have to tell you is, that three of the greatest ladies in the parish have been here this morning; and what do you think their business was? It was about the children, that we might send them to Mrs. Jenkins's cottage on Sunday morning, to get good learning, and the ladies promised they would teach them themselves!" John, who had kept his eyes upon her in a very ill-natured way, here interrupted her, and asked whether he was to have any supper or not? Mary, therefore, dropped the discourse, and brought out the loaf, and bacon, and beer, and they both sat down as usual. John soon broke silence, by saying that he hated such methodistical doings. What right had people to interfere about *his* children—he had no notion of being righteous over much—people were poor before such things were invented, and learning would not help people to live without work—and a great deal more of such ill-natured ignorance. His wife said, she supposed these schools were never intended to make people live without work; but if they made children, when they grew up, contented with their work, and kind at home, it would do much good. John continued very sullen upon the subject, and his wife thought it best to change the discourse. She had found that "a soft answer turns away wrath, while grievous words stir up strife;" and that there is time to keep silence, as well as a time to speak.

To her great grief, Sunday passed away, and the chil-

dren wandered, as usual, about the village; while John was lurking partly at home, and partly at the alehouse. Weeks passed away, and nothing further was said or done about sending the children to the Sunday School; when, one night, at the village alehouse, every one was praising Mrs. Turner and the ladies; and they said they were sure God Almighty had sent them to be a great blessing to the neighbourhood. Thomas Dixon, who wondered at first what they were about, said he never felt his home so comfortable on Sundays as it had been lately. His children, and especially his eldest boy, had taken such a good turn, that instead of having complaints about his robbing people's gardens, as he had constantly before, he was always at his spelling-book as soon as he came from work; and he told his father he hoped he should soon read the Bible as well as the minister himself. Henry Hopkins said he never saw the like before, that people should spend their money and time *for nothing;* and he added, striking the table with his fist, that it was a mortal shame for any to deny their children learning, now it was, as we may say, forced upon them.

Wildon went home rather sorry that he had refused to let the children go to the Sunday School; and yet he was too proud to tell his wife so, and she was too prudent to bring up the subject again, thinking that in *time* it might come round, through some other means, and *that* would be better than *her* appearing to teaze him about it.

John Wildon one day happening to be standing by a cart which had just been loaded at the kiln, the axletree suddenly broke, and a great number of the bricks tumbling down, several of them fell on one of his feet, and bruised it dreadfully. He was immediately carried home, and nobody could tell what would be the consequence. His wife was as attentive to him as if he had been a good man. It so happened that about three days after the accident, Mrs. Bently and Miss Sealy having observed that Mary Wildon had not sent her children to the Sunday School, called at her cottage, where they found John also, sitting with his leg laid up in a chair. This was the most favourable circumstance that could be for his wife and the children. They seemed very sorry for John's lameness, and made particular inquiries about it, and looked at the

bruise, and asked, what had been done for it? They promised to send his wife a bottle of vinegar and camphor, that she might constantly bathe his foot with it; and with God's blessing upon it, it was the means of his recovery. Wildon tried to be as civil as he could; but the raggedness of the children, (who were nevertheless very clean,) convinced the ladies, that he had not done his duty by them as a father. They spoke to him of the mercy of God, that he was not *killed* by the accident, or his leg so bruised as to mortify; and warned him to prepare for a *sudden* death; because, they said, *that* was the way to be prepared for any other *manner* of dying which God might please to appoint. With all this discourse Wildon was by no means pleased; but as they gave him some money, and promised to send him a few comfortable things suited to his illness, he endeavored to become a hypocrite, and thanked them for their advice. Before the ladies left the cottage, they took notice, that the children were without shoes and stockings: and without reproving John Wildon for not having sent them to the Sunday school, when it was *first* opened, they thought it was the best to advise him, as if they had not done it before, to send them on the next Sunday. Knowing the man's wicked temper towards his wife, they said no more, but wished him better, and left the cottage. John's wife was glad in her heart at the *manner* in which the ladies had spoken about the children, and she earnestly hoped, that God would now dispose her wicked husband's heart to send them. Like a prudent woman, however, she was determined to say no more about it, except *he* began the subject.

Mrs. Bentley and Miss Sealey were scarcely out of hearing, before John began to mutter, that nothing was talked of now at the Nag's head and at the Pitcher, but the *Sunday school*, and he saw he should have no peace, if he did not send some of his children to it; and he confessed that these ladies spoke very kindly, and were likely to help them in their trouble; so, Mary, said he to his wife, let's please them for once, and make Tom as clean as you can, and send him next Sunday; if it does nothing else, it will make these ladies kind to us, and we dont know what we may want before we die, and I should not like that we should be thought more ungodly than our neighbours.

Tom was sent to the school, at seven o'clock on Sunday morning, as was appointed. Every thing was new to him. As he was told to do as others did, he stood up, and then sat down, and then stood up again; and when it was proper time, he followed thirty or forty children to church; and from church all that belonged to the village went home to dinner; while those who came from a distance, eat the victuals they had brought with them in the school room. When Tom came home, his mother said very little to him, lest his father should begin a dispute; his brothers however soon asked him, what he had been about. As Tom did not yet even know what learning was, he gave some very odd answers to their questions. At two o'clock, away went the lad to school, and Mrs. Jenkins began to teach him his letters. Besides that the children were taught to read, they were asked questions about God their maker, and our blessed Saviour, the redeemer of sinners, and what becomes of people when they die? And who goes to heaven to be happy, or to hell to be miserable?

When Tom had been about a month at the school, Mrs. Turner called upon Wildon, and commended him highly for sending his son; and said, she expected the *other* children would go with him. As she went away, she put a half crown piece into his hand, and said "she hoped the bruise his leg had received, might be a blessing to himself and his family." John did not understand *how* a bruised leg, that kept a man from his work, could be a blessing to himself and his family. His wife merely replied, that she was a good lady, and therefore she was sure she had a meaning that was good; though Mary confessed she did not understand her. You acknowledged Tom knew better how to behave himself, and as the ladies are willing to take as many as we send, it is a pity they don't *all* go. Wildon answered, "That she might send as many as she liked, and if she was fool enough, she might go herself for aught he cared."

John and his wife had hitherto never thought of going to church, and knew nothing of the absolute need of every man and woman being converted, in order to the attainment of heaven. They knew as little about Jesus Christ as about Mahomet—and in this respect, though living in a Christian land, they themselves had lived like heathens.

Mary, however, at times, would go to see how *her* children looked among the rest, when they walked from school to church; and when she was sure her husband would not come home before she returned, she would step in, and hear what Mr. Turner said.

Now the reader must be informed, that this gentleman, though a very great scholar, suited what he said from the pulpit to the capacities of his hearers. He did not try to make the people scholars, but Christians; and therefore, though he used very correct language, so that the gentry had no occasion to be offended at his words, yet he used such *plainness of speech*, that ignorant people, like the Wildons, might easily understand, if they *wished* to be instructed.

At the *next* time she understood a little more; after she had heard the minister read the prayers, and preach several times, she began to think that churches were built, and ministers were appointed, for something that was very useful. These things she pondered in her heart, and all she could do was to make Tom read the Sunday lessons, and the text, over again to her in the evening as well as he could. She was soon enabled to discover, that though she had been a good mother and a good wife, she had lived a very ungodly life, and that it was a great mercy God had not cut her down by death as a fruitless tree that cumbers the ground. She prayed in the best way that she could, that God would be merciful to her, a sinner, and knowing that Mrs. Jenkins was a religious woman, and a most kind-hearted neighbour, though she was poor, she often called upon her to talk about the conduct of her children, but chiefly to hear the good old woman tell her "what she must do to be saved." By this she found that Jesus Christ came from heaven to die for us sinners. She learned also, that Christ had left us an example that we should tread in his steps, and that we are commanded to make it, as *he* did, our meat and drink to do the will of him that sent us into the world.

Tom improved greatly by going to the Sunday school, and his mind became somewhat informed about religion, by the little books that were given him to take home. Among these were *Dr. Watts's first and second Catechisms*, which he read over and over again to his mother; so that

she had almost got them by heart. These little catechisms, she was not ashamed to say, gave her almost all the religious knowledge she had, and were of excellent use in helping her to understand the Scriptures. One evening, when the children came home from school, Tom cried out, "O father, I wish you had been at church this morning, because you would have heard how wicked it is to break the Sabbath, and how all Sabbath-breakers, as well as liars, and thieves, are to be turned into hell." Wildon was quite angry at this, and said, "These schools would be the ruin of the hamlet, if children are taught to hate their parents, and come home and abuse them!" "I thought," added he, "that these ladies were to do famous things for us; and yet George Nicols has got into the county gaol, notwithstanding his Sunday learning, and I hear, with all their kindness, they wont interfere about it." "Well," said his wife, "you know he was always a very wicked boy, and did not fear God nor keep his commands—besides, you know the boy has a very wicked father, who never set him a good example. Perhaps he might have been in the gaol long ago, but for this school; and if it don't do *all* the good the ladies wish, I am sure, by *my* children, it does *some*." Wildon's *conscience* fully agreed with what his wife had said, though he would not acknowledge it. He sometimes wondered what could be got at church, that his wife should be so fond of going; and therefore he was induced now and then to skulk in, and to hear a little of the sermons, which was but very plain, and easily understood, and very solemn. John was observed to come earlier and earlier, so that as he heard more of the preaching, he spoke less surly about the school and the minister.

When Tom became sufficiently strong to follow the plough, he hired himself to a neighbouring farmer, and regularly attended Mr. Turner's ministry. Every Sunday he brought his dinner with him, and eat it at his father's cottage, in hopes that he might do some good at home in reading to his mother, and catechising the children, between school times. Tom's *good conduct* greatly improved Wildon's bad temper, and made him think better of Sunday schools, and less angry at his wife's religion. Thus matters went on for two or three years, when this poor

fellow, coming towards home from the alehouse, in a very dark night, missed the causeway, and was obliged to wade through a long piece of water that overflowed the road. At first he did not feel any ill effect, and went to his work the next day, as usual; but on the day following he found he had taken a violent cold, and had got a most obstinate cough, which none of the things his wife procured could overcome. When the children went to school, on the Sunday following, they told Mrs. Jenkins how ill their father was, and that he could not go to work. This was overheard by Miss Sealey, who entertained a great respect for Mary Wildon; and the next day she called at her cottage. She found the poor fellow in a very languid state, and promised to get Mr. Barker, the apothecary, to call the first time he went that way. Wildon was now almost overcome with the kind manner in which the young lady spoke to him, and Mr. Barker called on the Tuesday, and feared that Wildon had an inflammation on his lungs. This prevented him, for a time, from following his business and supporting his family. The prospect before them all was very afflicting, but Mary hoped and *prayed* that God would forgive her husband, and do his soul good, by his bodily trouble, and some how put it into her power to maintain him, while he lived, and bring up her young family, so that they might be kept from the poor-house. It was a comfortable circumstance that her youngest child was now seven years old, so that the children were capable of taking care of themselves and attending to their father, if she could get any thing to do to earn a livelihood. Tom brought home all his wages, except a trifle he kept to buy himself clothes, and Mrs. Bentley, one evening passing the cottage, inquired how John did. Mary said he was very weak indeed, but she was the most concerned about his soul; for though he had led such a wicked life, he did not seem to repent of his sins, nor cry to God for mercy. Mrs. Bentley went in, and talked a little to him about his sins, and about our Saviour; and concluded by saying that she would ask the minister to call upon him, for that he was a kind man, and an excellent physician for the soul. After this, putting some money into his wife's hand, she left him. In a day or two after, the minister called at Wildon's cottage, and entered into conversation

with him. He, as mildly as he could, consistently with his duty to God and man, reproved Wildon for his wicked course of life, and said he had cast off all fear of God, and that God might in justice cast away his soul for ever!—He told him he feared he would never recover, and warned him to cry to God for mercy for the sake of Jesus Christ. Wildon's eyes were fixed upon Mr. Turner, but he said not a word, neither confessing his sins, nor imploring forgiveness. The minister, however, went to prayer for him, and entreated the Holy Spirit to help the poor man to *pray for himself*. Just before he departed, he inquired of Mary Wildon whether the parish had done any thing for them? and being told they had not, he promised to use his influence with the church wardens. The next day Mary went, and got some work, and was paid for it; so that she saw evidently the care of Providence over the family. Wildon's eldest son, Tom, often came home, and talked to his father, in the best way he could, and read a prayer for him at his bed side, and Wildon seemed very attentive: Mr. Turner sent likewise one of the men who taught at the Sunday school, to do what he could in instructing him. Sometimes he appeared as if he were sorry for his sins, and at other times he seemed as careless as possible. It pleased God, however, that he considerably recovered, so as to work a little at his business. Now was the time to observe whether his confinement at home had been useful; and it *did* appear to have been so. The *kindness* of Mrs. Bentley and the minister, to him and his family, had greatly melted down his stubborn mind; and he began to think, that their doctrine might be as good as their conduct. As soon as ever he was able to go abroad, he took to going to church. This his wife greatly encouraged, and was glad to go with him, which she could well do, as *all* the children were at the Sunday school. Tom, at dinner on Sunday, would often repeat to him, in his own way, a good deal of Mr. Turner's sermon; and his wife greatly benefitted herself by telling him of those parts that appeared instructive and profitable to her. This alteration in the mode of spending his Sunday, produced an alteration for the better in the mode of spending his money. Instead of roaring over his beer at the ale-house, he became much more happy in

hearing his children read, at home, some of the little books that were given them as rewards for their diligence at school. In short, he became attentive to the concerns of his soul, and often lamented to God, and to his wife, what a bad husband and father he had been; and frequently expressed his hope that Christ would forgive him, and make him a better man. When the minister heard of this, he had some hopes of him, and scarcely ever passed near his cottage, without calling to inquire how they went on, and to give them five minutes' advice in a religious way. This condescension on *his* part, produced strong affection to him on the part of the family, and made his instructions always acceptable.

One evening, when Wildon went to pay his money at the club, Charles Wilber wanted him to stay to drink part of another mug of ale, which Wildon refused to do; and when going out of the room, Wilber called out in derision —"*Keep playing the hypocrite, Wildon—you'll please the parson!*" At this, poor Wildon's natural bad temper was almost ready to break out, but it was prevented, so that he only turned back, and said, "Let them laugh that win—you may call me *hypocrite;* but if a man is a hypocrite for being really sorry that he has been a bad husband, and a bad father, and desires to make his wife and his children happy—I wish there were more *such* hypocrites. I *was* as ignorant as you are, and have laughed at religion as you have done; but I hope I know better *now*—go and hear the parson yourself, and look into my cottage, and see how tidy and comfortable we live. I never was happy till lately; and thank God my family are happy too: at one time they had occasion to hate me, but now I hope we all love each other." Most of the people of the club took Wildon's part. Wilber made no reply; but we hope he was profited by the instruction.

Wildon never *completely* recovered from the violent cold he had taken, but every winter became more sickly. Every time, however, he was confined at home, he improved in spiritual knowledge, and very well understood what Mrs. Turner had once said about his bruised leg becoming a blessing to him, for it had been the means of his children going to the Sunday school, to learn to read the Scriptures; *this* had been the means of drawing his wife

to church to hear the word of God—and *this* had induced the minister to call and give him some instruction at home, which he hoped would be the means of saving his soul. When he was upon his dying bed, he blessed God, for having put it into the hearts of the ladies to begin *such* a school, because, through it, he had a hope of God's mercy for himself, and that God would provide friends to help his wife and children, when he was no more.

READER—what is your condition? I ask not whether you are rich or poor; but I ask, have you been born of God? have you been brought to repent of sin, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? if you have, and love him, keep his commandments, and follow his example; do as his followers did, spoken of in this tract; seek to do good to perishing sinners, go and instruct those who are ignorant of God and his Word, bring their children to the Sunday School, and thus become "a doer of his Word, and not a hearer only;" but are you yet in the "gall of bitterness," an enemy to God, and a servant to sin and Satan? are you yet without God and without hope? treasuring up to yourself wrath against the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds; to those that do not obey the truth, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil. Is this your condition? O consider what it will be to dwell with devouring fire: who can dwell with everlasting burnings?

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№ 33

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

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LITTLE MARTHA,

OR

The Grace of God in leading a Child to Christ.

Some time in the year 1824, as I was riding in the country, and preaching the Gospel from place to place, I paid a visit to the Baptist Church at the High Hills of Santee, to meet an appointment I had previously made. After waiting for a long time, I had well nigh concluded that not a single soul would meet me at the house of God; but at length, I discovered a woman and her two little daughters approaching the sanctuary. They entered the house and took their accustomed seats. These three individuals formed my congregation. I immediately began to inquire within myself, for what purpose I had rode thirteen or fourteen miles that morning, to meet so small a company. That, however, the time might not pass away wholly unimproved, I concluded to spend a few minutes in prayer, reading the Scriptures, and serious conversation. In conversing with the woman, I discovered that she was not a stranger to experimental religion. During our conversation, she took occasion to speak of the religious experience of a little daughter, whom she had buried a few years since. I was so much edified with the plain and simple narration, that I felt myself abundantly rewarded for my visit to the place. On parting with her, I requested her to furnish me in writing with a short account of the life and death of her little Martha. After some time, I received from her a manuscript containing a statement of the few interesting facts, which are interwoven in the following narrative.

Martha Ann Seele was born some time in the year 1813.

It appears that her mother, being a pious woman, was anxious to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She was particular in teaching little Martha her prayers, and instructing her to look to Christ for pardon and salvation. When only five years of age, it was very manifest that God's Spirit was moving on her heart, and exciting her attention to the one thing needful. Even at this early period, she was in the habit of frequently retiring to some secret place, that she might commune with God in prayer. Many expressions, which escaped her lips, afforded good evidence that she was not only seriously inclined, but that she was a true child of God. She would often say to her mother, "Mamma, God is good to us all; O how I love God." What was still more satisfactory as to the reality of her change, she manifested a continual dread of sin. The fear of displeasing God seemed habitually to accompany her, and to throw a serious and holy restraint upon her whole conduct.

Her mother used frequently to retire for the purpose of secret prayer. It was remarkable to observe how carefully little Martha would watch for the time, and with what cheerfulness and joy she would accompany her mother to the place of retirement. When the family removed from the place where they had hitherto resided, she wept on leaving her accustomed place of prayer. The spot was sacred and dear to her, for there she had often conversed with God, and feasted on his gracious smiles. On perceiving her sadness at the thought of leaving her beloved Bethel, her mother endeavoured to comfort her by impressing on her mind, that God was in one place as well as another; that he was every where with those who called upon his name. No sooner had the family become settled in their new place of residence, than little Martha sought out another secret Bethel, where she might tell her wants to God; and whenever she missed her mother, she would immediately resort to this sweet and sacred spot, that she might unite with her in addressing their heavenly Father. Happy child! to be blessed with such desires after God. Happy mother! to be blessed with such a pious, praying, heavenly-minded child.

"I am not able," says her mother, "to express how frequently and how strongly she manifested her love to

God, and also to those who preached his word." She once heard a discourse from these words, "The master is come, and calleth for thee." The minister took occasion, from the text and context, to dwell much on the faith and love of Martha and Mary, and to recommend to the attention of his congregation the character of these amiable females, whom Jesus loved. Little Martha, though so very young, was all attention to the discourse, and her eyes and heart was often lifted to God. As she was returning home, she said, "Mamma, I wish my sister Mary and me to be like the Martha and Mary spoken of to-day. O mamma, I wish every person to love God. I am afraid I do not love him enough. I hope we are all his children."

The Bible was her treasure. She was remarkably fond of reading it, as well as other religious books. She did not read it out of mere form, but because she loved it more than any thing beside, and because she wished to know and practice her duty, as it was there enforced. Whenever she came to the description of Christ's crucifixion, her soul was always full; she could never read the history of her Saviour's sufferings without shedding tears. After reading the direction of Christ, in which he says, "when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door," &c. she would immediately follow the divine injunction, and shutting herself up in her room, would pray to her Father in secret. When she arose in the morning she never forgot her prayers. When she attended school, she manifested no disposition to join her school-mates in their foolish and wicked sports. She would often tell them, that if they would join her in singing and praying, she would stay with them; but all their persuasions could never induce her to be rude or disorderly. In her intercourse with them, her conversation was remarkably serious and grave, and her deportment such as became a Christian.

Early one Sabbath morning, she opened a hymn-book, and casting her eyes on some lines, which very much pleased her, she immediately ran to her mother, and exclaimed, "O mamma, how beautiful are these words!" She then repeated, with great pleasure and animation, the following verse,

"Mercy, good Lord, mercy I ask,
"This is the total sum;
"Mercy through Christ is all my suit;
"Lord, let thy mercy come."

About this time, her soul appeared to be filled, in a peculiar manner, with love to God: and yet she would often express her fears that she did not love him sufficiently. Nor was her concern confined to herself; she manifested a deep anxiety for the salvation of others, and wished them to know something of that precious love which she felt in her own soul. She was ever ready to make use of all the means she could to benefit the souls of those with whom she associated. True, she was but a child; still she thought she had something to do—at least one talent given her to improve. From what has already been stated, it appears, that she endeavoured to be faithful to her school-mates; and beside this, she would frequently read religious books to the servants of the family, and speak to them of the Lord's mercy and goodness. Thus, in her simple and child-like way, she became, to all around her, a preacher of righteousness.

From expressions which would frequently escape her, it was evident, that, as young as she was, she meditated much on the subject of death. It was to her a pleasant theme. The thought of leaving the world, and perhaps soon, did not, in the least degree, disturb her mind. Indeed she appeared anxious to depart and be with Christ. "Do not weep for me when I die," would she say to her friends, "for I want to go to God." At another time, she said, "we know that we must all die, but we shall not always lie in the grave; there is a time when we must rise again." She seemed to have a premonition that her time on earth was short. When invited away from home by her school-mates, she would refuse to go, saying, that when she died, she wished to be with her mother. When conversing in this manner about dying, her mother could not refrain from tears. She desired her not to weep for her. Her mother observed, "my dear, you know I cannot help weeping." "I know you cannot," replied little Martha, "but you should pray for me, for I am nothing but sin. I long to do good, but I find I cannot. I long

to leave the world and go to God, and then I shall sin no more. I have read," said she, "where Christ desires little children to be brought to him, 'for of such is the kingdom of heaven.' I hope he will suffer me to go to him in heaven; I do not wish to remain in this world till I am grown up, because I am afraid of sin." Such were her fervent and pious breathings after the society of Christ, and the joys and purity of heaven. The following lines expressed the sentiments of her soul, and she was often heard singing them.

"Jesus, my all, to heaven is gone,
"He whom I fix my hopes upon;
"His track I see, and I'll pursue
"The narrow way, till him I view."

Her words and actions all tended to show that Christ was her trust; that all her hopes and desires centred in him. She thought much about him; She conversed much about him; and was never happier than when she was lying at his feet, confessing her sins and pleading for mercy. Whilst she *professed* to love and trust Christ, it was abundantly manifest that she *possessed* in no small degree the Spirit and temper of Christ. What could afford more striking evidence of this, than such an expression as the following? "Mamma," said Martha, "we must forgive our enemies, or we cannot expect that God will forgive us." Behold, reader! this little child had learned a lesson, which all the carnal wise men of the world together had never learned, nor never taught. Pure religion dwelt in her heart, and under its vital and heavenly influence, her feelings and affections were very much softened and refined. She was remarkably kind and affectionate to all with whom she had intercourse, especially to persons in affliction. At one time, when her father and mother were ill, she manifested all that attention, tenderness and concern, which we should expect to see in a person of riper years and maturer judgment. She would devoutly kneel by their bed side, and pray that the Lord would spare their lives, and raise them up to take care of their little children.

It has already been observed, that she seemed anxious to depart and be with Christ. This desire appeared to increase as her end approached. She manifested a remark-

able deadness to the world;—she had set her affection entirely on things above; her life was hid with Christ in God, and she ardently longed that Christ, who was her life, might appear, that she might appear with him in glory. She seemed already a full grown saint, well ripened for heaven. One Saturday evening she came to her mother and said, "Mamma, feel my pulse, I think I have a fever." Her Mother replied, "yes, my dear, you have." Evidently impatient at the tardy progress of the disease, Martha observed, "it is very slow in coming."—On the same evening on which she was taken ill, her fever became very violent; the next morning she was speechless, but on Monday she seemed to revive. As the fever was preying on her little tender frame, she would often raise her hands and eyes in prayer, and by her words and actions gave evidence that her soul was still full of love to God. On Tuesday, it was evident that death was on her, but she was in the perfect exercise of her reason, and appeared joyfully and triumphantly going to her heavenly Father. At this time, her mother said to her, "my dear, do you wish to go and leave Papa and Mamma?" "Yes Mamma," replied she, "I wish to go to God." "But what," said her mother, "shall I do for my darling to read and pray with me?" "Take my sister Mary with you," replied the dying child; "as for me, I want to go to my God." Such were the expressions and feelings of the pious little Martha, as she was breathing out her soul into the bosom of Christ, and the pure enjoyments of heaven. She entered into her rest at the age of seven years and fifteen days.

The history of littie Martha cannot fail of suggesting to the reader many valuable reflections.

1. Her experience may teach us how much grace and spiritual knowledge even a child is capable of obtaining, under the influence and instruction of God's word and Spirit. What is not the grace of God able to accomplish! In a child of seven years old, we behold Christian attainments of no ordinary character. What love to God! What love for his word and his ministers! What a dread of sin, and, what an ardent longing after holiness! What a spirit of prayer and supplication! What strong desires to do good! Surely all things are possible with God. To his name be all the glory.

2. What reproof does the example of little Martha carry to many old professors! Reader, it may be, that you are one who professed faith in Christ, ten, twenty, or thirty years ago. And yet, in comparing yourself with this little child, have you not much occasion to be ashamed? Like her, have you chosen a place of retirement, where you daily meet the Lord? Do you love God and his word as ardently as she did, and yet, like her, do you mourn that you love so little? Do you live every day in the performance of your duties, so that, like her, you can think of death with delight and triumph? Like her, have you become habitually dead to the world, and daily and hourly alive to the things of religion? Christian reader, I am fearful, that were little Martha now living, and were she to be in your company, or in your family, her example would often make you blush!

3. What an awful appeal does the Christian experience of this pious little girl make to the old, hardened sinner! Martha looked on herself as a sinner, a vile sinner; to use her own words, *as nothing but sin*. Reader, just pause for a moment, and consider. It may be you are one who have grown old in the service of the devil. You have, perhaps, often grieved the Holy Spirit, neglected the means of grace, despised the warnings of your Bible, of your preachers, of your parents, of your own conscience; and this, too, for a long series of years! O thou hardened, stubborn, guilty rebel! how shouldst thou feel at the remembrance of thy folly! If a little child, seven years old, regards herself as *nothing but sin*, what a load of anguish and horror oughtest thou to feel, who hast sinned so long, and with such a high and heaven-daring hand! If she, in consequence of sin, deserved nothing but destruction, what a hot and burning hell dost thou deserve to be tormented in! If she found it absolutely necessary to go to Christ for salvation, how hasty shouldest thou be in going to that Saviour, whom thou hast so long insulted and passed by! Be assured, poor, hell-deserving sinner, there is no time to be lost. Fly, fly from the wrath to come; for surely, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for thee!

4. Let parents be encouraged to teach their children

godliness when young. Many parents neglect their children, from the impression that they are not old enough to understand the truths of religion. It is true, that no person, young or old, can experimentally learn the truths of religion, without the aid of the Spirit; but, with this divine assistance, a child may become as well acquainted with the plain, simple maxims of the Gospel, as the man of age and experience. The pious Martha affords evidence of this. O ye fathers and mothers! as you regard the eternal welfare of your children's souls, begin to teach them in their tenderest years. By plain and simple illustrations, endeavour to enforce upon them the important truths of the Gospel; and then lift up your agonizing prayers to God, that, by his spirit, he would render these truths effectual to their salvation.

Finally, let the young, let little children be encouraged to go to Christ. Follow the example of this pious girl, whose experience you have read. For you, there are many precious encouragements. God has declared, that those who seek him early, shall find him. He has singled you out from all the rest of the world, and made promises to you, which he has made to none beside. Now your consciences are tender; you are not crushed down with the cares of life; God addresses to you his special invitations and commands, and Christ opens wide his arms, and says, "suffer little children to come unto me." My dear young friends, what greater encouragements can be given, to prevail upon you to "remember your Creator in the days of your youth?" With respect to you, it may emphatically be said, "now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." You are young, but *remember*, you are not too young to be sinners. Martha was a sinner, and as such she went to Christ. Go ye to Martha's Saviour, and he will have mercy on your immortal souls. You are young, but you are not too young to die. Martha was young, and yet Martha died. Do you wish to die like her? Do you wish to say on your death-beds, as she said, "I want to go to my God?" Then, like Martha, you must be good children, love God, and give your souls to Jesus.

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No. 33.

No. 34

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

FRAGMENTS,

WHICH ARE GATHERED UP, THAT NOTHING MAY BE LOST.

FROM THE LIFE AND SAYINGS OF PHILIP HENRY.

1. When he had completed the thirtieth year of his life, he noted this in his Diary; "So old, and no older, Alexander was, when he had conquered the great world; but I have not yet subdued the little world, *myself*."

2. He guided himself in the turns of his life by that good rule, to follow Providence, and not force it.

3. He preached funeral sermons for all—rich or poor, old or young, even little children; for he looked upon it as an opportunity of doing good; he called it, setting-in the plough of the word, when Providence had softened and prepared the ground.

4. To check the forwardness of young men, he used to relate, that once, at a meeting of ministers, a question of moment was to be discussed among them; upon the proposal of it, a confident young man shoots his bolt presently. "Truly," said he, "I hold it so." "*You* hold, sir!" said a grave minister, "it becomes you to hold your peace."

5. Once, at a meeting of ministers, being desired to subscribe a certificate concerning one whom he had not sufficient acquaintance with, he refused, giving this reason, that he preferred the peace of his conscience before the friendship of all the men in the world.

6. In 1658, Lady Puleston died: "She was," saith he, "the best friend I had on earth; but my Friend in heaven is still where he was, and he will never leave me, nor forsake me."

7. He would often say, "We are that *really*, which we

are *relatively*. It is not so much what we are at church, as what we are in our families."

8. "Those do well, that pray morning and evening in their families; those do better, that pray and read the Scriptures; but those do best of all, that pray, and read, and sing psalms; and Christians should covet earnestly the best gifts."

9. He would often beg of God to fit us for the next providence, whatever that might be; and he was unwilling (unless the necessity were urgent) that any should go from his house in a morning before family worship; reminding his friends, that "prayer and provender never hinder a journey."

10. It is a prayer he often put up in his family, "that they might have grace to behave as a minister, and a minister's wife, and a minister's children, and a minister's servants, should behave; that the ministry might in nothing be blamed."

11. "Have communion with few—be familiar with one—deal justly with all—speak evil of none."

12. "We are apt to make the *circumstances* of religious services more the matter of our discourse than the *substance* of them."

13. "The ark is a guest that always pays well for its entertainment. And when Christ had borrowed Peter's boat to preach a sermon out of it, he presently repaid him for the loan with a great draught of fishes."

14. He gave it as a rule, "never to speak of any one's faults to others, till we have first spoken of them to the offender himself."

15. He looked upon the public reading of the Scriptures in religious assemblies to be an ordinance of God. The bare reading of the word he used to compare to the throwing of a net into the water; but the expounding of it, is like the spreading out of that net, which makes it more likely to catch fish.

16. "For every twenty years of our lives, we enjoy above a thousand Sabbaths, which must be all accounted for in the day of reckoning."

17. He would commonly say to his children, with reference to their choice in marriage—"Please God, and please yourselves, and you will never displease me."

18. When some of his friends persuaded him to spare himself, he would say, "It's time enough to rest when I am in the grave; what were candles made for, but to burn?"

19. "Every creature is *that* to us, and only that, which God makes it to be. Duty is our's, events are God's. The soul is the man, and therefore, *that* is always best for us, which is best for our souls. The devil cozens us of all our time, by cozening us of the present time. All grace grows, as love to the word of God grows. God, who is the first and best, should have the first and best. A part in Christ, is a good part. All is well that ends everlastingly well. Time and the things of time are nothing, compared with eternity and the things of eternity."

20. He would not hear that any should be evil spoken of in his hearing, but reminded those who reflected upon people behind their backs, of that law, Lev. xix. 14. "Thou shalt not curse the deaf."

21. When some zealous people would have him preach against top-knots, and other vanities in apparel, he would say, "That was none of his business; if he could but persuade people to Christ, the pride, vanity, and excess of those things would fall of course:" yet he had a dislike to vanity and gaiety of dress, and allowed it not in those he had influence upon. His rule was, "that in such things we must neither be *owls* nor *apes*—affect neither singularity nor modishness."

22. He used to recommend to his friends these four Scripture arguments against sin, to be ready in an hour of temptation:

> Is this thy kindness to thy friend?
> It will be bitterness in the end.
> The vows of God upon me lie:
> Should such a man, as I am, fly?

See 2 Sam. xvi. 17.—2 Sam. ii. 26.—Psalm lvi. 12.—Nehem. vi. 11.

23. Preaching on that prayer of Christ for his disciples, John, xvii. 21. *That they all may be one*, which, no doubt, is an answered prayer, (for the Father heard him always,) he showed, "that, notwithstanding the many sad divisions that are in the Church, yet, all the saints, as far as they are sanctified, are one—one in relation; one flock, one family, one building, one body, one bread; one in image

and likeness; of one inclination and disposition; one in their aims and prayers; one in friendship, in interest, and inheritance; nay, they are one in judgment and opinion; though in some things they differ, yet those things in which they are agreed are many more, and much more considerable, than those things in which they differ. They are all of a mind concerning *sin*, that it is the worst thing in the world; concerning *Christ*, that he is all in all; concerning the *favour of God*, that it is better than life; concerning the *world*, that it is vanity; concerning the *word of God*, that it is very precious."

24. He noted in his Diary this saying of a godly man, a hearer of his, as that which affected him—"I find it easier to go six miles to hear a sermon, than to spend one quarter of an hour in meditating upon it, and praying over it in secret, as I should, when I come home."

25. When two of his children lay dangerously ill, after he had been earnestly praying for them, he wrote thus: "If the Lord will be pleased to grant me my request this time concerning my children, I will not say, as the beggars at our door are wont to do; 'I'll never ask any thing of him again;' but, on the contrary, he shall hear oftener from me than ever; and I will love God the better, as long as I live."

26. He rejoiced much in the visits of his children, and his usual saying, at parting, was, "This is not the world we are to be together in, and 'tis well it is not; but there is such a world before us." And his usual prayer was, "That our next meeting might be either in heaven, or further on in our way toward it."

27. In his last will, this is the prayer which he puts up for his children: "That the Lord would build them up in holiness, and continue them still in brotherly love, as a bundle of arrows which cannot be broken."

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No 35

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

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THE LAUNDRY MAID.

From the first revelation of the Divine will made to fallen man, this truth has been taught, that no *flesh shall glory in his presence.* From the time that Adam yielded to temptation, and broke the commandment of his God, no man can be saved, but by free and unmerited grace. What mercy is it, that this grace is free for the poor as well as the rich, for the unlearned, as well as for the highly educated. A poor man can equally with the rich man understand that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and is he not as capable of believing with the heart unto righteousness, and of glorifying his Heavenly Father, by bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, exemplified in a holy temper, submission to the Divine will, and zeal for the glory of God?

The fact is recorded in the Scriptures, that our blessed Lord has "chosen the *weak* things of the world to confound the things which are mighty," teaching us that He can use what instrument He chooses to perform His work.

The brief narrative of facts contained in the following pages, may tend to set forth this truth.

The parents of Sarah K—— were persons in the lowest class of life, who lived in a remote northern county of Ireland. They were ignorant of every thing except the means of procuring a livelihood for themselves and their family; but, being industrious and cleanly, they gave their children some good habits, which Sarah had reason to be thankful for, when circumstances led her to seek her bread as a servant.

As these poor people never seemed to think that they had immortal souls, they had, of course, no care for the religious education of their children. Sarah had never

learned to read, and there was not a Bible or Testament in her father's house; her Parents could not afford to send her to school, and indeed there were few schools in that country when Sarah was a child; there were then but few kind ladies and gentlemen who felt the importance of educating the poor in the fear, and in the knowledge of God. Sarah was employed in spinning, in mending the clothes of the family, and in assisting her mother in all her various domestic duties: but as she was very lively, and had never been led to reflect on the holiness and justice of God; as she had not heard that "sin is a breach of the commandment," she went, as often as her mother would permit, to places of amusement where the name of God was blasphemed: visited among her neighbours on the Sabbath-day, or walked with them to kill the time. "God was not in all her thoughts," and she lived a sinner and a transgressor of his commandments, and careless about religion until she attained the age of twenty-five years.

At this time it pleased the Lord in His providence to send into the neighbourhood a person who was anxious to devote his talents to his service. He, as the faithful follower of his Master, sought to be of use to his fellow-creatures: he not only circulated the Scriptures amongst those who could read, but went about through the houses of the poor, and read to all who would listen to him. Sarah was among the hearers, her heart seemed to open like Lydia's, as described in Acts, xvi. 14, 15. She heard, for the first time, that she was a sinner, and she likwise heard that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin; and while she mourned over the sinfulness of her heart, which had led her so far from God, she rejoiced that He had not cast her off in his wrath, but had "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John, iii. 16. The Holy Spirit brought light to her mind in the hearing of the sacred word, and Sarah appeared really to be "a new creature;" her great anxiety now was to learn to read, that she might for herself study the word of God. She was nearly twenty-six years old when she began in earnest to learn; she was glad to get assistance wherever she could, and her anxiety to attain this desirable object was so great, that in a few months she was able to read so

as to understand what she read with tolerable accuracy. She continued daily to improve, and soon became well acquainted with the Scriptures. She likewise delighted in prayer, and while she lived it was her constant practice to pray three times a-day. No business was allowed to interrupt this practice, as she learned from her Bible to be "not slothful in business." Rom. xii. 11. Her desire to devote some time to the gaining a knowledge of the Scriptures, did not lead her to neglect her duties as a daughter, or omit the domestic employments in which she used to be engaged; indeed, she became more industrious, for she no longer frequented dances, or joined in parties with idle people, therefore she had more time to assist her mother. This conduct at first met with approbation from the more wise and prudent of her acquaintance; but when they saw that she appealed to the Bible as the *only* rule for all her actions, they joined with others in ridiculing her, saying that she pretended to be wiser and better than her neighbours.

As Sarah was treated with much unkindness by the greater part of her family, and was anxious to contribute to her own support, she sought for an engagement as a servant, and was eventually hired, in the capacity of a laundry-maid, by a lady, who lived about forty miles from Sarah's native place. The family of her mistress consisted chiefly of young ladies, who were living what is generally called a life of fashion, but which should more properly be termed a course of folly and ungodliness.

Even in this family the sweet and happy expression of Sarah's countenance was remarked, and it has been frequently said by them, "it is surprising that Sarah looks so pleasing, and yet she is not handsome:" notwithstanding this interest which they felt in her favour, they took pleasure in teasing her. In many ways they tried to ridicule her. Those who would seriously consider the tendency of such conduct, must perceive its folly and cruelty: but it proves that young persons, who are, by some, considered so innocent and amiable, are inclined naturally to be both selfish and cruel: and that frequently, though they may be constrained to approve of the character formed by the grace of God, they will really despise and hate that grace that makes it estimable.

As Sarah was the only servant in the house who knew any thing of real religion, she was consequently often obliged to hear profane, and even blasphemous expressions; but though she frequently reproved those who uttered them, it was with such affectionate gentleness that her fellow-servants were seldom, if for a time, long angry with her.

One circumstance, well worthy of attention and imitation, proved the truth and reality of her religious profession, and the sincerity of her love to God and to the interests of her fellow creatures. The coachman, who was vain, foolish, and much addicted to swearing, she tried to persuade to give up this custom; but finding she could not prevail, she told him that she would pay him a certain sum on each day if he would refrain from swearing: at first he took her money, and was highly amused with the idea of gaining so much; but after a little he reasoned with himself on the subject, "why, thought he, does Sarah give me this money; she loves her God more than she loves it: we all know money is a good thing, but she knows it is a better thing to please God, and she is happier than any of us; I will not take her money, yet I will give up swearing."

This servant began to read his Bible, and continued in the constant practice of doing so: he gave up swearing, profane jesting, and other evil practices, and there is reason to believe, that this poor man became indeed a changed character, and a religious man.

As Sarah loved her God, she seemed for His sake, to love all his creatures: she grieved to see any being suffer: with a poor fellow creature she has frequently divided her food and her clothes; and even for a hungry dog, she would deprive herself of part of her meals. When pieces of bread had been carelessly swept into the ashes, she used to pick them out, observing on such an occasion, "nothing ought to be thrown away which any of God's creatures can use. Remember what our Lord said to his disciples: He desired them to gather up the fragments, that nothing might be lost; though He created the food while distributing it." "These," she used to say, "will feed the little birds, and we know our Heavenly Father cares for the sparrows." She delighted in all the works of God—the fields, the trees, the

flowers. It seemed as if religion had created in her a taste very seldom to be met with in a person who had so few advantages from education, and whose situation necessarily obliged her to be much occupied with the daily laborious occurrences of life.

It has been already mentioned that the young ladies of this family were all engaged in fashionable amusements; they were frequently out until a very late hour. Sarah was grieved on this account: she knew that they were sacrificing eternity for time, and living without any serious consideration of the value of their immortal souls. But it might be supposed that this was no concern of hers, and that she could do nothing to prevent it; but when the *love of Christ constrains* the meanest of his servants to desire to bring glory to God, and to lead sinners to our Saviour, much may be done; prayer can be offered up, and the humble prayer of faith shall be heard. All things are under the immediate guidance of God, and he can use small means to effect great purposes. Sarah's whole conduct showed that she "*loved her neighbour as herself;*" she was therefore anxious for the salvation of all, and she considered that nothing she could do would be too much, if the Lord should honour her as an instrument, to show these thoughtless young people that to be truly religious was to be truly happy. When the young ladies returned at a late hour from a ball, or a play, they generally found Sarah waiting for them, and when she saw them weary and sleepy, she used to ask them to allow her to attend them, or to procure for them something they might wish for; they were peculiarly attracted by this kind attention, because as laundry-maid it was not her business to sit up for them, and they often expressed surprise, when they knew that after having attended them until two o'clock in the morning, she was to be found at her work, as usual, at five or six o'clock.

When Sarah became a little more acquainted with her young mistresses, she ventured to ask them to allow her to read the Bible for them sometimes, to which, though they did not object, they often listened with carelessness and inattention; however, Sarah persevered, and she used occasionally to speak to them concerning the happiness of the Christian; one whose sins were pardoned, and who

was saved by Christ Jesus; this was quite new to them all, yet they perceived that she was happy, and they were persuaded that this belief formed the foundation of her happiness, and afforded her a peace and joy, which they found the amusements *they* had been pursuing could not bestow.

One night the young ladies, upon their return home, brought with them some of their friends. Sarah was, as usual, ready to receive them, and attended them. They all met to talk over the affairs of the past evening; one spoke of her partners at the ball, another of her dress, others of different trifles; but all proved they were not quite contented with the occurrences of the evening, and that they had no solid ground of comfort. Sarah for some time observed this silently; she then said, "dear ladies, will you forgive me if I speak a little freely to you?" They encouraged her to do so, expecting she would say something which they might turn to their amusement: this was not, however, the effect produced; she showed them much of the folly of a gay life, and the unsatisfactoriness of the evening's employment; and when she found that they confessed the truth of what she said, she laid before them so warmly the happiness which the Christian feels in becoming the faithful servant of Christ, that they felt a seriousness of mind, and a contempt for the pleasures of the world which they never had before experienced. After Sarah had left them, one of their young visiters remarked, "well, that poor girl enjoys a happiness of which we know nothing."

A circumstance occurred which gave Sarah an opportunity of leading these young ladies from the enjoyment of merely vain and selfish indulgence, to make a persevering effort for the benefit of a fellow-creature. A poor old woman, who gave evidence that she did indeed serve our Lord Jesus Christ sincerely, by endeavouring in all things to do and to suffer his will, with much submission, fell into great distress and poverty, and was indebted to the kindness of some poor neighbours, who were very little better off than herself, for a place in which she might lay her head. This was told by Sarah to one of the young ladies, who spoke to her father about it, and he gave a cottage for the poor old woman's use, which was easily put in order

for her. Another old woman also and two children were lodged in it, and in that cottage Sarah had the pleasure of seeing her young mistresses, for whom she felt such an interest, listening to the dying declarations of one of the dear saints of God, who, though poor with regard to the things of this world, was rich in faith. She died rejoicing in Christ her Saviour, and declared that all fear of death was taken away; for she knew that God had, for Christ's sake, pardoned all her sins, and was persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, should be able to separate her from the love of God which was in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. viii.

Sarah continued to act in a consistent manner for about two years, bearing a testimony against sin with gentleness, firmness, and even dignity; such as can only be found in those who constantly realize a sense of the presence of God. Her example, her exhortation, and her prayers, appeared to succeed even before she was laid in the cold and silent grave. Some of the young ladies for whom she was so interested, began to read their Bibles more earnestly; and a degree of seriousness pervaded the whole family, when it pleased the Lord to lay Sarah on a bed of sickness, and of death. A very infectious fever broke out in the country; many died of it; Sarah was seized with the illness: there were then no fever hospitals in the neighbourhood; she was carried to a place where a nurse was provided for her, and a very skilful physician was engaged to attend her. Every necessary comfort was procured, but the Lord chose to take her to Himself; and as the disorder was violent and infectious, none were allowed to see her during her illness, except those who were engaged to attend her. These were irreligious people; but though they could not understand her motives, and were strangers to the influence of Divine grace in the heart of a sinner, they were persuaded of the sincerity of her religion, witnessing that she prayed much, and frequently spoke of her Saviour and Redeemer.

The day after Sarah was taken ill, the coachman was attacked by the same complaint; he was removed to his mother's house, and attended by the same Physician; he also died, and there is reason to hope that he trusted in

Jesus the Saviour of Sinners, and there was sufficient proof that he had been led to believe, and to hope in Christ, by the holy conversation and the holy life of Sarah. They were both buried in the same grave.

But though Sarah was taken from this world, she was not forgotten. The firm, though humble testimony which she had borne to the truths of religion, produced, as it always will, its lasting effects; and though dead, she yet spoke to those who loved and respected her while living. Her death had a powerful effect on the minds of all who had witnessed her life. A fear of God, and a solemn sense of His Majesty seemed to pervade all the inmates of the family. Some became more religious, and determined that *they would serve the Lord*—the Bible was more read; the works of the Rev. Mr. Newton became a favourite book. This had been a favourite book with Sarah. Circumstances occurred which favoured the increase of those pleasing appearances. After a little time all worldly company was given up, and in that house, where only a a few years before nothing but what had a tendency to encourage vanity and dissipation, was to be met with, the blessed doctrines of the gospel were delighted in, and Jesus Christ was thankfully acknowledged as the Lord. This family had tried the world and all its enjoyments; they found that they had been catching at a bubble, they had been pleased with the improvement of intellect, they had admired the works of creation, but God was not in all their thoughts. "The landscape had their praise, but not its Author." The power of the human mind was highly estimated, but God who had formed that mind, had been forgotten. *Now*, they were led to the enjoyment of a peace which the world can neither give, nor take away.

The soul that sees him, or receives sublim'd
New faculties, or learns, at least, t' employ
More worthily the powers she own'd before,
Discerns in all things, what with stupid gaze
Of ignorance, till then she overlook'd,
A ray of heavenly light, gilding all forms
Terrestrial in the vast and the minute;
The unambiguous footsteps of the Lord,
Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.

The view of the "rolling worlds," the proofs of the immensity of space, and the vastness of creation, had given them sublime ideas, and grand conceptions of the greatness of God—in "the lustre of the insect's wing," they had admired the beauties of the works of God, but still they had been ignorant that they were sinners, and that "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise," and this poor Laundry Maid, ignorant of the learning of this world, but eminently taught of God, was the instrument chosen to lead those who were wise for this world to lay all their wisdom and all their vanity at the feet of him who had been "despised and rejected of men." Three of those who had witnessed Sarah's humble, Christian conduct, are now in eternity. One, on his death-bed, with calm and confident hope, repeated, "yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. Thy rod, and Thy staff they comfort me." "O yes," said he, "it is like leaning on the arm of a dear friend."

Another, during an illness of some months, enjoyed the presence of her Saviour. "I rejoice to think," said she, "that I am complete in him." "I *know* that when Christ, who is my life, shall appear, I shall also appear with him in glory."

The last of the three who have died, had lived for years a consistent and tried Christian: a short illness, though violent and painful, terminated her earthly existence; but she was enabled to testify that her hope was built on the *Rock of ages*, and that she *knew in whom she believed.*

Several of those to whom Sarah used to read the Bible, and to entreat to *come to Jesus*, for pardon and sanctification, are still alive; they have felt grateful to the Lord for having sent them, though by humble means, a message of salvation; and they would exhort all Christian servants to remember that humility, faith and prayer, must bring down blessings wherever they are found, and that even they may assist, under the divine blessing, in carrying on that great work of God, which is rapidly going forward over the whole world. May the Lord put it into their hearts to make the trial, not trusting in their own strength, but in His who has said, "My strength shall be perfected in

thy weakness." They are entreated to recollect, that, however much they may be occupied in domestic duties, they probably are not more so than Sarah was: yet in the hope of being an instrument in the hand of her Saviour to lead others to the fountain of life, she deprived herself of sleep. Her mind was *stayed on God;* she lived a life of prayer. She has been heard to say, that while her hands, and even her head were engaged in the world, her endeavour was to keep her heart with God.

If this poor servant maid was enabled, by Divine grace, so to glorify her Saviour, what, my young friends, may you, who have leisure and education, not do? We are fully aware, that God only can really convert a soul, but He uses means, He answers prayer. Observe, it was Sarah's humble, holy, consistent conduct, that engaged the attention and affection of the family with whom she lived, and brought the conviction to their minds, that she acted from higher motives than they had any idea of: she was cheerful and happy: she showed from what source she derived her happiness; and while with deep humility she cast herself at the foot of the cross, she felt that communion with God, which raised her affections to Heaven.

May you in this, imitate this poor Laundry Maid, and may you seek to bring down blessings on yourselves, and on all with whom you have intercourse.

God has promised to give His Holy Spirit to them who ask Him. O may you, and all, persevere in asking, remembering that it is said, ask, and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

Let worldly minds the world pursue,
  It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
  But grace has set me free.

Its pleasures now no longer please,
  No more content afford;
Far from my heart be joys like these,
  Now I have seen the Lord.

As by the light of opening day
  The stars are all conceal'd;

So earthly pleasures fade away,
When Jesus is reveal'd.

Creatures no more divide my choice,
I bid them all depart;
His name and love, and gracious voice,
Have fixed my roving heart.

Now, Lord, I would be thine alone,
And wholly live to thee;
But may I hope that thou wilt own
A worthless worm like me?

Yes! though of sinners I'm the worst,
I cannot doubt thy will;
For if thou hadst not lov'd me first,
I had refused thee still.

A WORD TO THE SLOTHFUL.

By John Bunyan.

If you would know a sluggard in the things of heaven, compare him with one that is slothful in the things of this world.

1. He that is slothful is unwilling to set about the work he should follow;—so is he that is slothful for heaven.

2. He that is slothful is one that is willing to make delays; so is he that is slothful for heaven.

3. He that is a sluggard will make any small matter an excuse to keep him off from attending to his work; so is it also with him that is slothful for heaven.

4. He that is slothful does his work by halves; and so it is with him that is slothful for heaven: he may almost, but he shall never altogether, obtain deliverance from hell; he may almost, but he shall never, without he mend, be altogether a saint.

5. They that are slothful usually let the time in which things are to be done pass away; and thus it is also with them that are slothful for heaven, they miss the seasons of grace, and therefore,

6. They that are slothful have seldom or never good fruit; so also it will be with him that is slothful for heaven.

7. They that are slothful are chid for the same; so also will Christ deal with those that are not active for him. "Thou wicked and slothful servant, out of thine own mouth will I judge thee;" thou saidst, I was thus and thus; "wherefore, then, gavest not thou my money to the exchangers?" "Take the unprofitable servant, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

1. What shall I say? Time runs; and *will ye be slothful?*
2. Much of your lives is past; and *will ye be slothful?*
3. Your souls are worth a thousand worlds; and *will ye be slothful?*
4. The day of death and judgment is at the door; and *will ye be slothful?*
5. The curse of God hangs over your heads; and *will ye be slothful?*
6. Besides, the devils are earnest, and laborious, and seek, by all means, every day, by every sin, to keep you out of heaven, and hinder you of salvation; and *will ye be slothful?*
7. Your neighbours are diligent for things that will perish; and *will you be slothful* for things that will endure for ever?
8. Was Christ slothful in the work of your redemption?
9. Are his faithful ministers slothful in tendering this unto you? Are not you slothful in hearing them?
10. And, lastly, if all this will not move, I tell you, God will not be slothful or negligent to condemn you, "whose damnation now of a long time slumbereth not;" nor will the devils neglect to fetch you, nor hell neglect to shut its mouth upon you.

Sluggard, art thou asleep still? Art thou resolved to sleep the sleep of death? Will neither tidings from heaven nor hell awake thee? Wilt thou say still, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, and a little folding of the arms to sleep?"

Arise, man, be slothful no longer; set foot, and heart, and all, in the way of God, and run: the crown is at the end of the race; there, also, stands the kind Forerunner, even Jesus, who has prepared heavenly provision to make thy soul welcome, and he will give it thee with a more willing heart than ever thou canst desire it of him.

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THE PROGRESS OF SIN.

BY ANDREW FULLER.

When our Saviour spake of his making men free, the Jews were offended. It hurt their pride to be represented as slaves; yet slaves they were—and such is every sinner, however insensible of it, till Christ hath made him free. And the longer he continues in this state, the more he is entangled, and the less capable he becomes of making his escape. Sin is a master that will not suffer its slaves to rest, but is always hurrying them on from one thing to another, till having finished its operations, it bringeth forth death. The way of sin is a way in which there is no standing still; a kind of a down-hill road in which every step gives an accelerated force till you reach the bottom. Such is the import of those emphatic words of the apostle, "Ye were servants to iniquity, unto iniquity."

To be a servant to iniquity is descriptive of the state of every unconverted sinner. All may not be subject to the same kind of evils: one may be enslaved to drunkenness, another to uncleanness, another to covetousness, another to fashion, and another to self-righteous pride; but these are only different forms of government, suited to different tempers and constitutions: all are servants to iniquity; and all, who continue such, are impelled, in a manner, to go on in their work, "servants to iniquity, unto iniquity." The proofs of this tendency to progression will appear in the following remarks.

1. He that yields himself a servant to sin, in any one of its forms, admits *a principle which opens the door to sin in every other form.* This principle is, that the authority of God is not to be regarded, when it stands in the way of

our inclinations. If you admit this principle, there is nothing to hinder you from going into any evil which your soul lusteth after. You may not, indeed, be guilty of every bad practice; but, while such is the state of your mind, it is not the fear of God, but a regard to man, or a concern for your own interest, safety, or reputation, that restrains you. If you indulge in theft, for instance, you would, with the same unconcern, commit adultery, robbery, or murder; provided you were tempted to such things, and could commit them with the hope of escaping punishment. It is thus that he, who transgresses the law in one point, is guilty of all; for HE, that forbids one sin, forbids all; and a deliberate offence against Him, in one particular, is as really a rejection of his authority, as in many.

Moreover, if the mind be unrestrained by the fear of God, a regard to man will have but a feeble hold of it. Sin, in various shapes, will be frequently indulged in secret; and, being so indulged, it will soon break out into open vices: for it is not in the power of a man, with all his contrivance, long to conceal the ruling dispositions of his soul. When king Saul had once disregarded the divine authority, in his treatment of the Amalekites, there were no bounds to the evil workings of his mind; full of jealousy, envy, and malignity, he murders a whole city of innocent men, repairs to a witch for counsel, and at last puts an end to his miserable life.

2. Every sin we commit, goes to *destroy the principle of resistance*, and produces a kind of desperate carelessness. Purity of mind, like cleanliness of apparel, is accompanied with a desire of avoiding every thing that might defile; and even where this has no place, conscience, aided by education and example, is a great preservative against immoral and destructive courses; but if we once plunge into the vices of the world, emulation is extinguished. The child that is accustomed to rags and filth, loses all shame, and feels no ambition to appear neat and decent.

The first time a person yields to a particular temptation, it is not without some struggles of conscience; and when it is past, his soul is usually smitten with remorse; and, it may be, he thinks he shall never do the like again; but, temptation returning, and the motive to resist being weakened, he becomes an easy prey to the tempter. And now

the clamours of conscience subside, his heart grows hard, and his mind desperate. "There is no hope," saith he, "I have loved strangers, and after them I will go." Under the first workings of temptation, he sets bound to himself, "Hitherto I will go, and no further;" but now, all such resolutions are of no account. The insect entangled in the spider's web can do nothing; every effort it makes, only winds another thread round its wings; and, after a few ineffectual struggles, it falls a prey to the destroyer.

3. Every sin we commit, not only goes to destroy the principle of resistance, but produces *an inordinate desire after the repetition of it;* and thus, like half an army going over to the enemy, operates both ways against us, weakening our scruples, and strengthening our propensities. This is manifestly the effect in such sins as drunkenness, gaming, and fornication. It is one of the deceits of sin to promise, that if we will but grant its wishes in this or that particular, it will ask no more; or to persuade its deluded votaries, that indulgence will assuage the torrent of desire; but, though this may be the case for a short time, sin will return with redoubled violence. It rises in its demands from every concession you make to it. He that has entered the paths of the destroyer, can tell, from experience, that it is a thousand times more difficult to recede, than to refrain from entering. The thirst of the leech at the vein, and of the drunkard at his bottle, is but a faint emblem of the burnings of desire in the mind, in these stages of depravity.

4. If we yield to one sin, we shall find ourselves under a kind of necessity of *going into other sins, in order to hide or excuse it.* This is a truth so evident, that it needs only to be stated, in order to be admitted. Examples abound both in Scripture and common life. When sin is committed, the first thing that suggests itself to the sinner is, if possible, to conceal it; or if that cannot be, to excuse it. Adam first strove to hide himself among the trees of the garden, and when this refuge failed him, it was "the woman," and the woman, too, "that God gave to be with him," who tempted him to do as he did. Nearly the same course was pursued by David. Having committed a grievous crime, he first betakes himself to intrigue, in hopes to cover it; and when this failed him, he has recourse to

murder; and this being accomplished, the horrible event is, with an air of affected resignation, ascribed to Providence: "The sword devoureth one as well as another." Nor is this the only instance wherein that which has begun in a wanton look has ended in blood. What numbers of innocent babes are murdered, and one or both of their unhappy parents executed, for that which is resorted to merely as a cover for illicit practices!

5. Every act of sin tends to form a *sinful habit;* or if already formed, to strengthen it. Single acts of sin are as drops of water, which possess but little force; but, when they become a habit, they are a mighty stream, which bears down all before it. The *drunkard* has no natural thirst for strong liquors. Some worldly trouble, or the love of loose company, first brought him to make free with them; but having once contracted the habit, though he knows he is every day wasting his substance, shortening his life, and ruining his soul, yet he cannot desist. Even under the power of stupefaction, he calls for more drink: his dreams betray his lusts: "They have smitten me," says he, "and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake! I will seek it yet again." —The *gamester*, at the first, thought but little of doing what he now does. He fell into company, it may be with a card party, or had heard of a lucky adventure in the lottery, or knew a person who had made his fortune by a successful speculation in the stocks; so he resolves to try a little of it himself. He succeeds. He tries again; ventures deeper and deeper, with various success. His circumstances become embarrassed; yet having begun, he must go on. One more great adventure is to recover all, and free him from his difficulties. He loses; his family is ruined; his creditors are wronged; and himself, it is not impossible, driven to such means of support, as shall bring him to an untimely end. The *debauchee* was once, it may be, a sober man. His illicit connexions might originate in what were thought, at the time, very innocent familiarities. But having once invaded the laws of chastity, he sets no bounds to desire; "His eyes are full of adultery, and he cannot cease from sin."

6. When the sinner becomes thus besotted in the ways of sin, there are commonly a *number of circumstances and*

considerations, beside his own attachment to it, which entangle his soul, and, if infinite mercy interpose not, prevent his escape. He has formed connexions among men like himself.—His interest will suffer.—His companions will reproach him.—The world will laugh at him. Many, in such circumstances, have been the subjects of strong convictions, have shed many tears, and professed great desire to return from their evil courses; yet, when it has come to the test, they could not recede: having begun and gone on so far, they cannot relinquish it now, whatever be the consequence.

Reader, is this, or something like it, your case? Permit a well-wisher to your soul to be free with you. Be assured, you must return or perish for ever, and that in a little time. Infidels may tell you there is no danger; but when they come to die, they have commonly discovered, that they did not believe their own assertions. "Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth;" and before him you must shortly give an account. Will you plunge yourself into the pit, whence there is no redemption? That tremendous punishment is represented as not prepared originally for you, but for the devil and his angels. If you go thither, you in a manner take the kingdom of darkness by force.

Let me add, it is not enough for you to return, unless, in so doing, you return *to God*. "Ye have returned, but not unto *me*," saith the Lord. If I felt only for your credit and comfort in this world, I might have contented myself with warning you to break off your outward vices, and cautioning you against the inlets of future evils. Animals, though void of reason, yet through mere instinct, fly from present danger. "In vain is the net spread in the sight of a bird." The fishes of the sea avoid the whirlpool. And shall man go, with his eyes open, into the net? Will he sail, unconcerned, into the vortex of destruction? But it is not from present danger only, or chiefly, that I would warn you to flee. My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved from the wrath to come. Know, then, that though you should escape the grosser immoralities of the world, yet you may be still in your sins, and exposed to eternal ruin. Your danger does not lie merely, or mainly, in open vices. Satan may be cast out

with respect to these, and yet retire into the strong holds of proud self-satisfaction.

It is not the outward spot that will kill you; but the inward disease, whence it proceeds. "From within, even from the heart, proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, and blasphemies." Every out-breaking of sin in your life is a proof of the inward corruption of your nature. If this fountain be not healed, in vain will you go about to purify the streams. I mean not to dissuade you from "breaking off your sins, but to persuade you to break them off by righteousness." But the only way in which this is to be done, is that to which our Saviour directed in his preaching—"Repent, and believe the Gospel." All reformation, short of this, is only an exchange of vices. But if you can, guilty and unworthy as you are, renouncing all other hopes and dependencies, believe in Christ, you shall be saved. His blood was shed for sinners, even the chief of sinners. His obedience unto death was so well-pleasing to God, that any sinner, whatever has been his conduct or character, that comes to him in *his* name, pleading his righteousness, and his only, will be accepted for his sake. He hath not only obeyed and died for such as you, but is now at the right hand of God, carrying into effect the great ends of his incarnation, life, and death. "Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost, all them that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

If, Reader, thou canst embrace this doctrine, it will heal thy malady. If, from thine heart, thou canst receive salvation as of mere grace, through the redemption of Jesus Christ, it is thine own. If thou canst confess thy sins upon the head of this sacrifice, "God is faithful and just to forgive thy sins, and to cleanse thee from all unrighteousness." God makes nothing of thy reformations, prayers, or tears, as a reason why he should accept and save thee; but every thing of what his Son hath done and suffered. If thou canst be of his mind, making nothing of them in thy pleas and hopes for mercy, but every thing of Him in whom he is well-pleased, eternal life is before thee. And at what time this doctrine shall give peace to thy troubled soul, it shall purify thy heart in such a manner, that all thy former

ways shall become hateful unto thee, and sobriety, righteousness, and godliness, shall be thy delight.

But if thy heart be still hardened in sin; if Jesus, and salvation by grace, through his name, contain nothing attractive, but rather what is offensive to thy mind; know this, there is no other name given under heaven, among men, by which thou canst be saved; and the remembrance of thy having once in thy life, at least, been told the truth, may not a little imbitter thy dying moments.

Happy are all they who, returning in the name of Jesus Christ to his Father and their Father, his God and their God, are made free from sin, and have their fruit unto holiness! *They* too are *progressive*, but it is in a course the opposite of that which has been set before the reader. "The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger." The service of God shall become more easy to him; truth shall appear more evident; the marks of his conversion shall multiply; his character shall strike its roots deeper; the hope of his perseverance shall continually renew its strength; and sorrow and joy, retirement and society, the dispensations of Providence, and the ordinary means of grace, shall all contribute to make him more meet for the "inheritance of the saints in light."

Rev. Dr. Witherspoon has suggested these several steps in the downward course of sin.

1. Men enter and initiate themselves in a vicious practice *by smaller sins.* Heinous sins are too alarming for the conscience of a young sinner; and therefore, he only ventures upon such as are smaller, at first. Every particular kind of vice creeps in in this gradual manner.

2. Having once begun in the ways of sin, he *ventures upon something greater and more daring.* His courage grows with his experience. Now, sins of a deeper die do not look so frightful as before. Custom makes every thing familiar. No person who once breaks over the limits of a clear conscience, knows where he shall stop.

3. Open sins soon *throw a man into the hands of ungodly companions.* Open sins determine his character, and give

him a place with the ungodly. He shuns the society of good men, because their presence is a restraint, and their example a reproof to him. There are none with whom he can associate, but the ungodly.

4. In the next stage, the sinner *begins to feel the force of habit and inveterate custom:* He becomes rooted and settled in an evil way. Those who have been long habituated to any sin, what a hopeless thing it is to reform them! One single act of sin seems nothing; but one after another imperceptibly strengthens the disposition, and enslaves the unhappy criminal beyond the hope of recovery.

5. The next stage in a sinner's course is *to lose the sense of shame, and sin boldly and openly.* So long as shame remains, it is a great drawback. But it is an evidence of an uncommon height of impiety, when natural shame is gone.

6. Another stage in the sinner's progress is to harden himself so far, as to *sin without remorse of conscience.* The frequent repetition of sins stupifies the conscience. They, as it were, weary it out, and drive it to despair. It ceases all its reproofs; and like a frequently discouraged friend, suffers the infatuated sinner to take his course. And hence,

7. Improved sinners often come *to boast and glory in their wickedness.* It is something to be beyond shame; but it is still more to glory in wickedness, and esteem it honourable. Glorious ambition indeed!

8. Not content with being wicked themselves, they *use all their arts and influence to make others wicked also.* They are zealous in sinning, and industrious in the promotion of the infernal cause. They extinguish the fear of God in others, and laugh down their conscientious scruples. And now,

9. To close the scene, those who have thus far hardened themselves, are *given up of God to judicial blindness of mind and hardness of heart.* They are marked out as vessels of wrath fitted to destruction. This is the consequence of their obstinacy. They are devoted to the judgment they deserve.

Reader! view it with terror.

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

No. 37

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

POOR JOSEPH.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

A POOR, unlearned man, named Joseph, whose employment was to go on errands, and carry parcels, passing through London streets one day, heard psalm-singing in a place of worship; and went into it, having a large parcel of yarn hanging over his shoulders. It was Doctor Calamy's church, St. Mary's, Aldermanbury. A very well-dressed congregation surrounded the Doctor. He read his text from 1 Tim. i. 15.—"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the chief." From this he preached, in the clearest manner, the ancient and apostolic Gospel, the contents of this faithful saying, that there is eternal salvation for the vilest sinners, only through the worthiness of Jesus Christ, the God that made all things. "Not many rich, not many noble, are called by this doctrine," says the Apostle; "but God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty."

While the thoughtless part of the congregation listlessly heard this doctrine, and, if they were struck with any thing, it was only with some fine expression, or well-turned sentence, that the Doctor uttered—Joseph, in rags, gazing with astonishment, never took his eyes from the preacher, but drank in, with eagerness, all he said; and trudging homeward, he was heard thus muttering to himself: "Joseph never heard this before; Jesus Christ, the God who made all things, came into the world to save sinners like Joseph; and this is true; and it is a 'faithful saying.'" Not long after this, Joseph was seized with a fever, and was dangerously ill. As he tossed upon his bed, his constant language was, "Joseph is the chief of sinners,

but Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, and Joseph loves him for this." His neighbours, who came to see him, wondered, on hearing him always dwell on this, and only this. Some of the religious sort addressed him in the following manner: "But what say you of your own heart, Joseph? Is there no token for good about it? No saving change there? Have you closed with Christ, by acting faith upon him?" "Ah, no," says he, "Joseph can act nothing—Joseph has nothing to say for himself but that he is the chief of sinners; yet seeing that it is a 'faithful saying' that Jesus, he who made all things, came into the world to save sinners, why may not Joseph, after all, be saved?"

One man finding out where he heard this doctrine, on which he dwelt so continually, and with such delight, went and asked Dr. Calamy to come and visit him. He came, but Joseph was now very weak, and had not spoken for some time, and though told of the Doctor's arrival, he took no notice of him; but when the Doctor began to speak to him, as soon as he heard the sound of his voice, he instantly sprang upon his elbows, and seizing him by his hands, exclaimed, as loud as he could, with his now feeble and trembling voice, "O, Sir, you are the friend of the Lord Jesus, whom I heard speak so well of him. Joseph is the chief of sinners; but it is a 'faithful saying,' that Jesus Christ, the God who made all things, came into the world to save sinners, and why not Joseph? Oh! pray to that Jesus for me, pray that he may save me: tell him that Joseph thinks that he loves him, for coming into the world to save such sinners as Joseph." The Doctor prayed; when he concluded, Joseph thanked him most kindly; he then put his hand under his pillow, and took out an old rag, in which were tied up five guineas, and putting it into the Doctor's hand, (which he had kept all this while close in his,) he thus addressed him: "Joseph, in his folly, had laid this up to keep him in his old age; but Joseph will never see old age; take it, and divide it amongst the poor friends of the Lord Jesus; and tell them that Joseph gave it them for His sake who came into the world to save sinners, of whom he is the chief." So saying, he reclined his head. His exertions in talking had been too much for him, so that he instantly expired.

Dr. Calamy left this scene, but not without shedding tears over Joseph; and used to tell this little story with much feeling, and as one of the most affecting occurrences he ever met with. It naturally suggests the following observations:

1. Let us admire the power of Divine Grace. The whole congregation, whether rich or poor, were sinners in the sight of a holy God, and stood equally in need of that salvation, which by the Gospel was preached to them. But while the thoughtless assembly heard it with inattention, the word of God came with "demonstration of the Spirit and of power" to the heart of Joseph, and fixed his attention to its infinite importance. To what can we ascribe this difference, but to the free grace of Him "who will have mercy on whom he will have mercy; who hath hid those things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes, and hath chosen the poor in this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

To display the power and sovereignty of this grace, the Apostle tells us, that God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, for the express purpose that no flesh should glory in his presence, but that he that glorieth should glory *only in the Lord.* This is very different from the general views of men. There is an inclination in the human mind, when convicted of sin, to *do* something in order to escape the wrath of God, and merit his favour. Many go about to establish a righteousness of their own, not submitting to the righteousness of God; while others endeavour, by their own exertions, to make their hearts better, and so prepare them for the reception of Christ. Joseph had no idea of such a way of salvation. When asked about his heart, if there was no token for good about it, no saving change there? "Ah, no," said he, "Joseph can act nothing—Joseph has nothing to say for himself, but just that he is the chief of sinners," &c.

2. The Gospel, when received, produces love to God and his people. Joseph had received the word, not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, and it wrought effectually in his believing it. He experienced

the truth of the Apostle's assertion, "We love him because he first loved us." "Oh! pray," says he, "to that Jesus for me, pray that he may save me! Tell him that Joseph thinks that he loves him for coming into the world to save such poor sinners as Joseph." It was a sense of the love of Christ manifested in saving sinners, that first attracted his attention, drew forth his warmest affections, and occupied all his thoughts. Thus it is with every sinner saved by grace. A sense of the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, always produces love, and this is shown by universal obedience to the will of God, and studying to adorn the doctrine of God by a life and conversation becoming the Gospel. Joseph could not now manifest his love to God in this way, but he does it by showing love to his people, and that *because* they were the friends of Jesus. When he heard Dr. Calamy's voice, he exclaimed, "O, Sir! you are the friend of the Lord Jesus, whom I heard speak so well of him, *and whom I love for what you said of him;*" and to this profession of love he gave a substantial proof, in giving to the poor friends of Jesus all he possessed in the world.

3 The Gospel is sufficient to support the mind in the immediate prospect of death. Joseph did not comfort himself with the thought that he was no worse than his neighbours, and therefore, as God was merciful, he would be safe enough. The atonement of Christ was the only ground of his hope and confidence, in the view of death, judgment and eternity. Being justified by faith, he had peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ, and rejoiced in the hope of the glory of God.

It is appointed unto men once to die, but after death, the judgment. Think of this, ye that forget God. Remember that, although you are now alive and in health, perhaps this night your soul may be required of you. Consider your ways, and flee for refuge to the hope set before you in the Gospel.

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№ 38

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

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CONVERSION

OF

A UNIVERSALIST.

A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW-YORK CHRISTIAN HERALD.

MR. EDITOR,

THE following instance of hopeful conversion, occurred some time since in New-York. The writer having related the principal circumstances to some Christian acquaintances, it was judged that they would prove interesting to the friends of true religion, if not instructive to some of its rejectors; and he was decidedly advised to give them to the public.

Mr. A. is a gentleman of respectable connexions, good natural judgment and disposition, and of more than ordinary taste for mental improvement. He enjoyed the advantages of a Christian education, which he appeared highly to appreciate, until, in his search after books, he unhappily fell in with an insinuating French writer, from whom he imbibed the principles of infidelity. He now began to more than question the sacred character of the Scriptures. He tried them by the principles which his unsanctified heart suggested, and pronounced them fraught with contradictions and absurdity. From respect, however, to the feelings of a beloved mother and sister, he did not avow his sentiments so openly, and with such frequent repetitions, as do some unbelievers. It must also be mentioned, that he retained, in general, the moral

and amiable habits, to which he had been carefully bred.

How long he persevered in rejecting the obligations and divine origin of christianity, the writer is unable precisely to state. He was, however, gradually led to suspect, that he might have adopted his opinion of the sacred writings too hastily; at least, without having sufficiently considered the arguments, which may be adduced in their favour. Being naturally of a reflecting turn, and independent in his inquiries, he set himself to consider whether he had gained any thing by rushing into the night of infidelity. The result of his inquiries was, that there existed one modification of Christianity, which promised him more *quietness* of mind, if it did not rest upon better evidence, than infidelity itself. He accordingly became inclined to the flattering hypothesis of the Universalists; and after some months attendance at their place of worship, declared himself fully established in it. From this time, he exhibited the appearance of one decidedly settled in his religious opinions; and by no means ashamed to acknowledge and defend them. He even considered it his *duty* to disseminate them, as he had opportunity. As to the possibility of his being deceived or involved in destructive error, he *manifested*, and, as he afterwards informed me, *experienced* no uneasiness. His confidence in his opinions was so great, that he uniformly beheld those who discarded them with mingled regret and pity; and sometimes longed for the opportunity of evincing their supporting power on his death-bed.

It was during this stage of his religious belief that the writer became acquainted with him, and was induced, by the particular request of his Christian mother, to attempt to shake his confidence in Universalism. The effort proved unsuccessful. He was easily drawn into a free discussion of several points remotely affecting the subject; but defended himself with much promptness. I became more interested in him than ever, while the conversation had no perceptible effect to prejudice his feelings against me: on the contrary, he continued rather to seek than avoid my society. We several times renewed our friendly discussions, and as often closed them with no appearance of success on my part. He generally professed a sincere desire to follow truth, and a willingness, if wrong, to be convinc-

ed of his error; but never failed of intimating that his opinions continued the same.

The time was however near, which was to make severe trial not only of the *reality* but also of the *foundation* of his confidence. A malignant fever, which dissipated his strength, and threatened him with speedy dissolution, filled every heart with anxiety in his behalf. He only remained unmoved and fixed in the opinion, that he had nothing to apprehend from the approach of death. Nor was his confidence the effect of delirium, insensibility, or the secret expectation of recovery. His mind continued to be sound, and he appeared fully aware of the threatening symptoms of his disease. He had, at this time, no communication with persons of his religious creed; nor did he request it, but persevered in declaring that his opinions were still the same.

It was while he lay in this situation, that his pious sister hastily entered my house one evening, with the afflicting intelligence that her brother seemed to be dying, and urgently requested me to call and see him. I accordingly hastened to the house of affliction, and found the family, particularly the mother and sister, overwhelmed with the trying dispensation. The alarm, however, was premature. He awaked out of the deathlike swoon into which he had fallen, and appeared nearly as well as he had done for some hours before. I could not lose what threatened to be my last opportunity of suggesting a few thoughts to him on his exposure to death, and the immediate necessity of his being prepared for the event. I did not, however, think it expedient, in his present debilitated state, to dwell on the points of difference between us. When his attendants and friends had retired from his bedside, I observed to him, in a low tone, that there were some important truths which we held in common—as that it is our bounden duty and our privilege to repent of all our sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus;—that it is unquestionably prudent for us to perform faithfully whatever Jesus Christ has so evidently enjoined, although such obedience might not be held *indispensable* to our salvation; and that it is a serious thing to put the finishing hand to the work which God has allotted us in this world of trial;—concluding with the inquiry, "do you think that you have given these subjects

their proper attention?" He in reply assented to the truth of what I had stated, and frankly acknowledged that he had been very deficient in the performance of these acknowledged duties. He manifested a willingness to make them the subject of his meditations; expressing, at the same time, his apprehension that life was drawing to its close. He was asked if he wished me to pray with him; to which he coolly answered, that "he had no objection," but not without intimating, that "we still differed in our views of religion."

He has since assured me, that he felt, at that trying moment, no apprehension of his being exposed to the wrath of God, and no shuddering fears of death.

It would be impossible to describe the anxious feelings of his pious mother, at this dreadful hour. She had been, from the first of his sickness, even more concerned for the welfare of his soul, than desirous of his recovery; and had obtained a kind of assurance that God would thus far grant her petitions in his behalf. The same impression had been more deeply made on the mind of his praying sister.

In this state of anxiety I left them, after being their mouth to God in a short prayer, to relate the situation of the sick man to my family, and unite our supplications for him around the social altar. Several pious individuals had, by this time, become acquainted with his circumstances, and, I have reason to believe, were earnest in their requests to God for him.

I retired to rest with the painful expectation of hearing of his death in the morning. The morning arrived, and I received an early and surprising message from the family. The information was not that he had expired, but that he had experienced during the night a remarkable change in his religious feelings, and was anxiously waiting a visit from me. I lost no time in calling upon him, and found the information correct. He had, indeed, experienced a change in his opinion of himself and his condition, as a sinner before God, which was amazing. I could not have believed him capable of enduring the overwhelming views of his depravity and fearful circumstances which he now expressed.

"I wish to acknowledge to you," he said, with a countenance which spoke more forcibly than even his own

words, "how proudly and ungratefully I treated your kind endeavours to convince me of my errors; and that I now perceive my mistake."

"But have you at length discovered, that you were wrong in believing in universal salvation?" "Yes, I *know* that I was wrong in believing in it."

"Are you then convinced that you richly deserve to be condemned of God to an eternal hell; and that there is actually such a place reserved for impenitent sinners?" "Yes, I certainly *know* that there is such a place, and that I deserve to have my portion in it."

"It would appear that you have very different views of your character in God's sight, from what you expressed the last evening."

"Yes, I am like one who has come to himself; and I now see, that I am a poor miserable sinner. O what a proud heart I have got! It was my proud heart that made me an infidel and a universalist. I would not submit to understand the Bible as it actually reads. My *pride* led me to say to you, the last evening, that we still differed in our religious opinions. I believe that I have the proudest, blackest heart on the face of the earth. Oh, pray for me, that my proud heart may be humbled in the dust."

"But do you think that you are *now* justly exposed to the wrath of God, and that, dying in this state, you must go to hell?"

"O yes, I deserve to go to hell, and I don't know but it is entirely too late for me to escape it. If I might be made a plant in any part of Christ's garden, it would be an unspeakable mercy. But I am too great a sinner to expect it; there is nothing in me but pride."

He obtained an entirely different view of the world of sinners around him. The Bible was become to him a new book. "No words," he observed to me, "so exactly express this change, as those which are applied to the prodigal, 'And when he came to himself.' I only wonder that I have never seen things in this light before."

Having directed him, in a few words, to Jesus Christ, as the safe and only refuge for dying sinners, I put up a short prayer by his bedside, and left him for some hours to his own reflections.

On my return, I found him still in the same frame of

spirit, except that he now dwelt more, in his conversation, on the particular sins of his past life—his infidelity—his perversion of the word of God from its literal import—and his proud rejection of the Christian advice which had, at different times, been given him. He expressed his wonder that God had borne with his pride for so long a time, and particularly that he had passed by the haughty expressions of his feelings the last evening. "O," he repeatedly exclaimed, "why did he not then cast me down to hell!" He insisted, almost exclusively, on my praying that "his proud heart might be brought down to the dust." It was still his apprehension, and that of his friends, that he would not probably survive the day. He accordingly refused to consult his strength, but improved every opportunity of warning those who visited him, to escape from the coming wrath. To one who had been united with him in his former principles, he made a most solemn address, prefacing it with an affecting allusion to the certainty of his own mistake, and its unhappy consequences. "I thought," said he, "that I was sufficiently prepared, and not afraid to meet the king of terrors; but I now find that my former principles will not support me. No more can they give you support in the trying hour. Prepare, then, my dear ——, prepare to die." He seemed extremely desirous to efface from the minds of all, the impressions which his life or conversation had made in favour of Universalism; assuring them, that he not only found no refuge in that system, but knew the very contrary of it to be the truth of God.

For several long hours, his Christian friends were held in awful suspense respecting his "latter end;" and particularly his mother and sister, who spent much of the day in crying to God, with many tears, that he might yet be rendered an evident subject of his grace, and monument of his sovereign mercy. Nor were they left to supplicate in vain. He appeared, at my first interview with him in the morning, to be singularly impressed with the entire and deep depravity of his nature—sincere in confessing and renouncing his sins—and bereft of all hope of salvation from any source but the unmerited grace of God. He had not yet dared to throw himself into the arms of Christ; but the Holy Spirit was gradually preparing him to find peace and joy in believing.

Indeed, the work of the Spirit within him was so evident, and so plainly progressive, that I almost feared to suggest to him any advice, lest it should unhappily retard its completion. I could not refrain from observing privately to his pious relatives, "The Lord has manifestly taken this work into his own hands; and what he has thus remarkably begun, he will certainly finish."

It was late in the afternoon when he began to express some degree of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the all-sufficient Saviour of sinners. "I think," he observed, as I approached his bedside, "that I am a little better, both in body and mind."

"But how are you better in mind; you have not, I would hope, become more indifferent to the subject of your salvation?"

"O no:—but my mind is more tranquil. I think I can leave this subject with Christ. Perhaps I am deceived in my feelings, but they are very different from what I have experienced before now." In this composed frame of mind, with some intervals of doubt, arising from a knowledge of the great deceitfulness of his heart, he continued for two or three days. "My heart," he would sometimes say, "has certainly deceived me *once*, and I am much afraid that it will do so again!" But as his strength increased, his views of the sufficiency which there is in Christ, for even the very chief of sinners, became daily more permanent and happy. The following Sabbath proved to him a day long to be remembered. "It is the first Sabbath," he remarked, "that I ever enjoyed; and it really appears to me that I am in a new world—I am astonished at the revolution which has been effected in my religious views and feelings. I sometimes almost doubt whether that which I experience is a reality, and am ready to ask myself, 'do I not dream instead of actually enjoying it?' Never till now have I known what happiness is."

He continued to mend, from the time that his spirit became composed, resting in Christ, until he was restored to his former health. And I am happy to be able to say, that the hopes which his Christian friends indulged of his evincing, by his future conduct, the genuineness of his conversion, have not been, in the least, disappointed. He

is now a professed and acknowledged friend to those soul-humbling doctrines of Christ, and that devotedness to his work, which he once decried and despised. What will be the *termination* of his religious course, I shall not venture *certainly* to predict; but his acquaintances are now united in acknowledging the mighty change which has been wrought in his conduct, and that he affords uncommon evidence of being, in truth, what he professes himself, a disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus.

I have already exceeded the limits which I had prescribed to myself, in composing this narrative; but I cannot conclude, without just adverting to the solemn warning which it suggests to such as are placing their hopes of future happiness in the universal doctrine. Mr. A. was once as confident of safety from this source, as any of them can possibly be; and had he died in this confidence, his companions of the same creed would have pronounced his death happy, if not triumphant. But what would actually have been the consequence to his soul? The Holy Spirit has disclosed it; and Mr. A. lives to rejoice and bless God, that he is rescued from a misapprehension of the true Gospel—from a delusion which only fostered his pride, and lulled his apprehensions of danger, while he was actually passing on to the condemnation of the wicked; that he was led to discover the unsubstantial nature of his foundation, before the entire fabric of his hopes sunk in irrecoverable ruin. He looks upon his rescue from Universalism as a deliverance from going down to the eternal pit. Others there are, who do not obtain like mercy from God, but are manifestly given up of him to persevere in their confidence, until they experience its fatal effects in that world where the mistake shall never be remedied, and hope never come.

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No. 39

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

BRAVERY AND HAPPY DEATH OF JAMES COVEY.

Mr. Pratt relates an affecting anecdote of a sailor on board the Venerable, the ship in which Admiral Duncan commanded the fleet in the action against the Dutch, off Camperdown. He received the account from Dr. Duncan, lord Duncan's chaplain and relative, who, in the action, assisted the surgeon and his mate in binding up the wounds, and amputating the limbs of the unfortunate sufferers. "A mariner," says the doctor, "of the name of Covey, was brought down to the surgery, deprived of both his legs; and it was necessary, some hours after, to amputate still higher." "I suppose," said Covey, with an oath, "these scissors will finish the business of the ball, master mate?" "Indeed, my brave fellow," cried the surgeon, "there is some fear of it." "Well, never mind," said Covey, "I have lost my legs to be sure, and mayhap lose my life; but," continued he, with a dreadful oath, "we have beat the Dutch! We have beat the Dutch! so I'll even have another cheer for it; Huzza! Huzza!"

Covey was a good seaman, and noticed among his shipmates for his intrepidity; but he was pre-eminent in sin, as well as in courageous actions. About a fortnight before the English fell in with the Dutch fleet, he was alarmed by a dream, which made him tremble, and sometimes attempt to pray; but, not liking to retain God in his thoughts, he endeavoured to obliterate these impressions by drinking and blasphemous intercourse with the ship's company. His efforts, however, were in vain. The thoughts of his sins, of God, and of death, harassed his mind day and night,

and filled him with gloomy forebodings of what awaited him in this world, and the next, till the sight of the Dutch fleet, and their conversation with each other concerning the heroic achievements they should perform, dispelled the gloomy subject from his mind. As the two fleets were coming into action, the noble Admiral, to save the lives of his men, ordered them to lie flat on the deck, till, being nearer the enemy, their firing might do the more execution. The Dutch ships at this time were pouring their broadsides into the Venerable, as she passed down part of the Dutch fleet, in order to break their line. Covey, having lost all the impressions of his former reflections, heaped in rapid succession the most dreadful imprecations on the eyes, and limbs, and souls, of what he called his cowardly shipmates, for lying down to avoid the balls of the Dutch. He refused to obey the order, till, fearing the authority of an officer not far from him, he in part complied, by leaning over a cask which stood near, till the word of command was given to fire. At the moment of rising, a bar-shot carried away one of his legs, and the greater part of the other; but, so instantaneous was the stroke, though he was sensible of something like a jar in his limbs, he knew not that he had lost a leg till his stump came to the deck, and he fell. His legs were amputated; and he was soon put into Haslar Hospital, from which he at length came out, capable of walking by means of two wooden legs, and two crutches; but his spirits were sorely dejected, from fearing, that as his sins had brought upon him the judgments of God in the loss of his limbs, they would bring it upon him in the loss of his reason, and the loss of his soul.

Having heard of Orange-Street Chapel, Portsea, he came on the first Sabbath evening after his leaving the hospital. The text that evening was, Mark, v. 15. "And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed of the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind." The minister represented this demoniac as a fit emblem of sinners in general, especially of those who live without rule and order, drunkards, blasphemers, and injurious to themselves and others; but his sitting at the feet of Jesus clothed, and in his right mind, as an engaging representation of the sinner converted to God by

the Gospel, made sensible of the evil of sin, the value of his soul, and the necessity of salvation through a crucified Redeemer; enjoying peace of mind, having fellowship with Christ and his people, submitting to the authority of the Scriptures, and receiving instructions from Christ, the friend of sinners. Covey listened with attention and surprise; wondered how the minister should know him among so many hundred people; or who could have told him his character and state of mind. His astonishment was still more increased, when he found him describe, as he thought, the whole of his life, and even his secret sins. He could not account for it, why a minister should make a sermon all about him, a poor, wooden-legged sailor. His sins being brought afresh to his mind, filled him with horrors tenfold more gloomy than before. Despair for some minutes took a firm hold on his spirits; and he thought he was now going out of his mind, should die, and be lost; till the minister declared Jesus Christ was as willing to save the vilest of sinners, as he was to relieve this poor creature possessed of the devil; and that a man was restored to his right mind when he believed in him. He now began to think he had been out of his mind all his life, and that to love and serve Jesus Christ would be a restoration to his right senses again. He was now almost overwhelmed with pleasure. While hearing of the astonishing love of Jesus Christ to sinners, hope took the place of despair, and joy of grief and horror! Those eyes which had never shed a tear when he lost his legs, nor when the shattered parts of his limbs were amputated, now wept in copious streams, flowing from strong sensations of mingled joy and sorrow!

Some weeks after this, he called and related to me the whole of his history and experience. He was surprised to find that I had never received any information about him at the time the sermon was preached, which so exactly met his case. Something more than twelve months after this time, he was received a member of our church, having given satisfactory evidence of being a genuine and consistent Christian. A few weeks since, hearing he was ill, I went to visit him. When I entered his room, he said, "Come in, thou man of God! I have been longing to see you, and tell you the happy state of my mind. I be-

lieve I shall soon die; but death has now no terrors in it. The sting of death is sin, but thanks be to God, he has given me the victory through Jesus Christ. I am going to heaven! Oh! what has Jesus done for me, one of the vilest sinners of the human race!" A little before he died, when he thought himself within a few hours of dissolution, he said, "I have often thought it was a hard thing to die, but now I find it a very easy thing to die. The presence of Christ makes it easy. The joy I feel from a sense of the love of God to sinners, from the thought of being with the Saviour, of being free from a sinful heart, and of enjoying the presence of God for ever, is more than I can express! O how different my thoughts of God, and of myself, and of another world, from what they were when I lost my limbs on board the Venerable! It was a precious loss to me! If I had not lost my legs, I should perhaps have lost my soul!" With elevated and clasped hands, and with eyes glistening with earnestness, through the tears which flowed down his face, he said, "O my dear minister, I pray you, when I am dead, to preach a funeral sermon for a poor sailor; and tell others, especially sailors, who are as ignorant and wicked as I was, that poor, blaspheming Covey, found mercy with God, through faith in the blood of Christ! Tell them, that since I have found mercy, none that seek it need to despair. You know better than I do what to say to them: but, oh! be in earnest with them: and may the Lord grant that my wicked neighbours and fellow-sailors may find mercy as well as Covey!" He said much more; but his last words were, "Hallelujah! Hallelujah!" If the anecdote of his fortitude and courage is worthy of being recorded, I think it due to Covey, and to the honour of Divine Grace, to relate his dying testimony in favour of the religion of Jesus Christ. I wish Dr. Duncan and Mr. Pratt had witnessed the last, dying hours of this once ignorant and blasphemous sinner; they would have seen what a pleasing change was effected by the meek and efficacious grace of our compassionate Redeemer.

Portsea. JOHN GRIFFIN, *Min. of Gospel.*

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No. 39

№ 40

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

THE BIBLE THE TEST OF TRUTH;

OR SOME ACCOUNT OF

M. HENHOFER,

FORMERLY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CURATE OF MULHAUSEN, GERMANY.

M. Aloyx Henhofer was the Roman Catholic Curate of Mulhausen, in the Grand Duchy of Baden, having been presented to that living in the year 1818, by the Baron de Gemmingen, in whose family he was tutor for some years preceding.

Being desirous of effecting a change in his parishioners, many of whom were notorious for irregularity of conduct, he laboured earnestly among them, but without looking to that Power, or employing those means, without which the heart of man can never be turned from the evil of his ways. Hence his exertions, although indefatigable, produced no effect, and he only found cause for discouragement.

While labouring without perceiving any fruit from his labours, a friend earnestly recommended him to study the Holy Scriptures, and to observe, from the history of our Lord and his apostles, what that preaching is which really touches the heart. M. Henhofer followed this advice, and while studying the Holy Scriptures with an earnest

and heartfelt desire to benefit from their contents, he was led into an acquaintance with the truths of the Gospel, and thus discovered the reason why his labours had been unsuccessful. He now earnestly recommended his people to read the Bible also, and began to declare from the pulpit those important doctrines which relate to the necessity of a change of heart, of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; pointing out the danger of trusting to our own righteousness, and the mistake of looking to outward ceremonies for that salvation which can only result from faith in our blessed Saviour.

The truths which he now preached caused many of his hearers to reflect upon their past lives, to see the danger of their state by nature, and to flee to the Saviour. The effects of these doctrines soon appeared in the conduct of many of his flock. He preached the Gospel with much power; many persons from distant villages came to hear him, and his church was crowded with Protestants as well as Catholics.

The attention of his ecclesiastical superiors was attracted by these and other circumstances of a similar nature, and M. Henhofer was cited to appear before them, to give an account of his proceedings and doctrines. He arrived at Bruchsal in Easter week, 1822, and was detained there upwards of three months, without any decisive measures being adopted respecting him; during which time, he was required to reply to eighty questions; which led him to consider still more attentively the doctrines he had learned from the Bible. The health of M. Henhofer having materially suffered from confinement, he requested permission to return home for a short time, which was granted; but his illness still continuing, he transmitted to the ecclesiastical authorities the certificate of a physician, with a paper stating his doubts respecting the sacrifice of the mass, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, desiring to be convinced from the Holy Scriptures if he was in error; or if this was not done, stating his readiness to be excluded from a church which held doctrines to which he could not agree.

The episcopal council adopted the latter measure, and as his opinions were contrary to those of the church of Rome, they deprived him of his living; at the same time

offering to receive him again, if he would forsake what they called erroneous opinions. Happily for this good man, the Inquisition has no power in that country, and his enemies could not proceed further against him.

About this time he wrote to a friend, saying, "I regret that after having made this profession of my faith, I am prevented from continuing to serve a church which stands so greatly in need of labourers; but it is not my fault; I had no wish to proceed to extremities, or to engage in controversy: I desired to declare the Gospel of Christ; this was my only pleasure, and the sole object of my preaching." On another occasion he stated, that during the whole time he was curate of Mulhausen, he never spoke against the church of Rome; his whole endeavour was to diffuse the light of divine truth among those who were in darkness and ignorance as to their souls; and if he had sometimes spoken against the abuse of ceremonies, it was only to combat the erroneous opinions which were held by some of his parishioners, who thought that they were sure of salvation provided they strictly observed the *outward ceremonies* of their worship.

In the profession of faith which he published, he says: "Beware of attaching too much importance to outward ceremonies; we shall not obtain salvation and eternal happiness *because* we are members either of the Roman Catholic or of the Reformed church; the *mere name* of Catholic or of Protestant will not save us. Of what consequence is it to which church we belong, if we are not members of the Church of Christ; if we are not *really* members of His Church, in spirit and in truth? Of what avail is the temple in which we worship, if we are not ourselves the temple of the living God, and unless the Spirit of God dwelleth in us? 1 Cor. iii. 16.—There is but one true Church; it is that which leads us to regeneration and newness of life, by the pure and holy word of God, and by faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

M. Henhofer sought the truth with humility, and declared his willingness to retract any opinion he had advanced, if his opponents would convince him of error from the Holy Scriptures; but he would not yield to the mere declaration of the *authority of the church*, that common plea of ignorance, and the grand argument among Roman Ca

tholics in general. "The Christian," said he, "is told to be ready to give an answer to every man that asketh him a reason of the hope that is in him with meekness and fear; 1 Peter, iii. 15. and he should constantly meditate upon the important question, 'What must I do to be saved?' Acts, xvi. 30. Repeating prayers, fasting, performing stations, being present at mass, pilgrimages, confession, the sacrament, belonging to fraternities, purchasing indulgences, telling beads, praying to the Virgin Mary and to saints, and similar observances, *will not* answer that important question.—*They* cannot speak peace to the wounded conscience; for, *we must be born again*, John, iii. 3. and have no confidence in our own works and deservings."

He addressed those who assert that there is no salvation out of the church of Rome, and drew a comparison between what is taught in the Bible and the doctrines of the Romish church; desiring to induce them to show more indulgence towards their brethren, who wish to examine the foundation and ground of their belief. In the confession or declaration of his faith, which he published at this time, he expressed himself as follows:

"The Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ is our only Mediator and Advocate with God, the only ground of our salvation. 'For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all.' 1 Tim. ii. 5, 6. 'We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.' 1 John, ii. 1, 2. 'Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.' Acts, iv. 12.—These are the express declarations of Scripture; but the *church of Rome* adds, the merits and the intercession of saints and the Virgin Mary; appearing to consider Christ as a severe judge, and Mary as the advocate for us instead of the Saviour!

"The Scriptures tell us that by *one offering* Christ has for ever made perfect those whom he has justified, and that being washed from their sins in his blood, there is no other sacrifice required. 'Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, neither by the blood of goats nor of calves, but by his own blood, he entered in *once* into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemp-

tion for us—into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us. Not that he should offer himself *often*, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others. For then must he *often* have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now *once* in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. By *one* offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Now where remission of these (their sins and iniquities) is, there is *no more* offering for sin.' Hebrews, ix. and x.—Compare these declarations with the doctrine and practice of the Romish church, which, in the celebration of the mass *daily*, renews the sacrifice of Christ!

"The Scriptures declare that man is justified *freely* by grace, through faith, and not by works.—'The righteousness of God is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.—Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' (Read Rom. iii. iv. v. vi.) 'By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: NOT OF WORKS, *lest any man should boast.*' Eph. ii. 8, 9.—From this doctrine the church of Rome departs. It grounds the hope of salvation upon the good deeds and merits of saints, upon observance of rules of discipline, and the absolution granted by indulgences!

"The Scriptures plainly tell us that Christ instituted the holy communion in *both* kinds, and he commanded that the people should partake both of the bread and the wine. 'Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body; and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, *Drink ye all* of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' Matt. xxvi. 26, 27, 28.—The church of Rome has disobeyed this command of our Lord, and refuses to allow the laity to partake of the cup!

"The Scriptures say, that the bread and wine in the sacrament is the communion of the body and blood of Christ. 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the

communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' 1 Cor. x. 16.—The church of Rome tells us, that the elements, when consecrated, are actually changed or transubstantiated!

"The Scriptures teach that 'God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' John, iv. 24.—In the Roman Catholic church, the congregation adore the host, or bread of the communion!

"The Scriptures say that we ought not to be burdened with mere human precepts and ordinances. 'Touch not, taste not, handle not, after the commandments and doctrines of men.' Col. ii. 21, 22.—But many things of this nature, which have no foundation in the word of God, are directed and imposed by the Roman Catholic church.—'Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men—making the word of God of none effect through your traditions which ye have delivered.' Mark, vii. 7, 13.

"The Scriptures tell us, that 'in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils—forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving.' 1 Tim. iv. 1, 3.—The Roman Catholic church forbids the marriage of priests, encourages monastic vows of celibacy, and forbids the use of meats on certain days!

"The Scriptures direct that divine service should be had in a language which the common people may understand. 'If I come among you,' said St. Paul, 'speaking with [unknown] tongues, what shall I profit you.—If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding remaineth unfruitful.—How shall he that occupieth the room (or place) of the unlearned say Amen, at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest.—In the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue.—If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let one interpret; but if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church.' 1 Cor. xiv.—read the whole chapter.—The church of Rome acts directly contrary to this injunction of the Apostle, and celebrates the mass and

several other of its religious services in Latin, a language which the people do not understand !*

"The Scriptures tell us that the church 'is built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.' Eph. ii. 20, 21.—The church of Rome has fixed its foundation upon man, upon Peter and his successors, and its brotherhoods build upon Moses, Magdalen, Joseph, and others, while Christ alone is the true corner stone.

"The Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ has forbidden all disputes about rank and pre-eminence in his kingdom. Christ said to his disciples, 'The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came, not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.' Matt. xx. 25, 28. How different a picture does the church of Rome present; each individual wishes to be lord over others; and the Pope is above all, assuming authority over the kings of the earth, and claiming power over all men !

"Scripture tells us that the pastors or ministers are not lords over God's heritage, but that they should be ensamples to the flock—not having dominion over their faith. 1 Pet. v. 3. 2 Cor. i. 24. The church of Rome assumes a right to rule the consciences of men, and forbids them the use of those means whereby they might be enlightened, and their faith increased !

"Oh how many things there are in the church of Rome which God hath not ordained ! And how different they are from His will, as revealed to us in His own most holy word ! How many superstitious rites and ceremonies are practised, by which the Saviour is hidden from the eyes of the people, and they are blinded as to the only way of salvation ! Beware of resting upon outward forms, of be-

* A modern advocate of the church of Rome states, that the service is in Latin, in order that the people may not understand, lest they should pervert what they hear ! *Translator.*

ing satisfied because you belong to one or other denomination of Christians! Examine yourselves, pray, read the Scriptures, meditate upon them, and God the Holy Spirit will enlighten you. The first Christians acted thus. When the Bereans of old, had heard the doctrines which Paul and Silas preached to them, they 'searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.' Acts, xvii. 11. Our Saviour himself pointed out this as the course to be pursued. He said, 'Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think that ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me.' John, v. 39.

"Build not your faith blindly upon any man or minister, but inquire yourselves for the way of salvation. 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.' 1 Thess. v. 21. Remember how Christ warned his disciples, 'Beware of the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees,' that is, of their doctrine, Matt. xvi. 6—12. How many engage in the ministry merely as a worldly calling, and to obtain the means of a livelihood! Some there are who are faithful shepherds; but too many forsake the truths of the gospel, teaching the ordinances and traditions of men. The church of Rome builds much upon traditions, but the Scriptures neither know, nor authorize any thing of that nature. They tell us not of the benefits of masses, indulgences, dispensations and absolutions, to *be purchased with money;* they tell us only of Christ; they tell us of Him crucified for our sins; they tell us of His love, His grace, and His mercy, *without money and without price:* they point out the necessity of repentance, of faith, and newness of life. Whoever is thus renewed in the spirit of his mind, has the sure word of the Saviour promising everlasting life; how then can he need any human authority to confirm the word of God? Can he need the traditions of men?"

These quotations may appear long, but they are important, both from the spirit of the gospel which they manifest, and because M. Henhofer was a Roman catholic priest fully instructed in the doctrines of his church, and also in the truths of Scripture; so that the objection which has often been made to protestant writers, who notice the errors of Roman catholics, will not apply to him. *It cannot be said that he was unacquainted with the doctrines and precepts of the church of Rome.*

No. 40.

Many of his flock, like himself, were convinced of the truths of the gospel, and felt it to be their duty to leave a church whose doctrines, they were satisfied, were contrary to the word of God.

On the 6th of April, 1823, the Baron of Gemmingen, lord of the manor, (seigneur de paroisse,) and his whole household, with M. Henhofer, and forty other families, altogether amounting to two hundred persons, made a public profession of their faith, in the chapel of Steineyg, and afterward received the holy communion agreeably to the formulary adopted by the united protestant churches. This striking scene took place in a Roman catholic country, in the presence of many spectators from the neighbourhood, with open doors; but no hindrance or interruption was offered, a strong proof of the Christian spirit which exists between the two churches in the country of Baden; very different from the spirit which, alas! too often is manifested elsewhere.

As one half of the parishioners of Mulhausen continued to profess the Roman catholic religion, those who left that communion could not claim the use of the parish church, nor any support for their minister. Being unable to build a church and endow it for themselves, they were united to the parish Urbain de Pforzheim; and divine service, for the present, is celebrated in the domestic chapel belonging to the mansion of Steineyg. They earnestly desired their beloved M. Henhofer should continue to be their minister; but it was thought expedient to relinquish this plan, which might have given umbrage to the catholics in the neighbourhood.

However, M. Henhofer was examined on 11th of April, as a candidate for the protestant ministry, and afterwards was consecrated to that office, as pastor of Graben. He is a pious, temperate, estimable individual, and possesses considerable influence from his personal character. His address, from which the foregoing extracts are made, has caused a considerable sensation in Alsace: the Roman catholics have read it with a more lively interest, if possible, than the Protestants.

Since he left Mulhausen, several other individuals have also forsaken the Roman catholic communion; which proves, if further proof were needed, that it was the love of the truth, and not the personal influence of M. Henhofer,

which effected the change among his parishioners, which has been related.

This little narrative cannot be better concluded, than by some extracts from a letter addressed by the Baron de Gemmingen to his tenantry, at the time he embraced the protestant religion. He prefixed to it as a motto, the words of our Saviour, recorded by St. John. (xiii. 35.) 'By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.'

"*My friends in Jesus Christ*,

"Many among you have been surprised at my becoming a member of the protestant church, and I purpose to offer a brief explanation upon this subject, being desirous that my conduct should not be misunderstood, and thinking that what I have to say may strengthen and support some whose minds have doubted respecting my proceeding."

The Baron commences his letter by stating, that he wished to address a few words to his people, upon the change which had taken place in his sentiments. He then declares, that his regard for them would not be in the least diminished by his having become a member of the protestant communion; and proceeds thus:

"I have always sought your advantage, as far as lay in my power; and these sentiments are not weakened, but have received additional strength, since I have better learned the true foundation of Christian affection. My house will be open to you as formerly, and my best days will continue to be those in which I can promote your wishes."

The Baron then states, that he has no desire to make them mere proselytes to his present opinions, and that he will not enter upon the motives which led him to leave the church of Rome, further than to say, that he was induced so to do after long and serious reflection; and when he was fully confirmed upon these subjects, he should have thought it a denial of the Lord Jesus, if he had allowed any human regard, or worldly motives, to keep him from professing, in the face of the world, that faith which he had adopted. He says, that he suffered deeply when several of the principal of his people urged him to return to the Roman catholic faith; but he could not comply with their requests; that he had always rejoiced to meet their wishes in worldly matters, even at his own incon-

venience; but that the salvation of his soul was a matter infinitely more important, as he might be called, without delay, to render an account to the Saviour.

He proceeds thus: "I am told that several of your number fear lest hatred, or, at least, continual misunderstandings, should spring up, in consequence of this change in religious profession, which has been made by myself, and forty families among us. Worldly considerations are of no weight when they interfere with the concerns of our souls; but I can promise, in the name of those who with me have joined the protestant church, that peace, union, patience, and Christian charity, shall be the constant aim of our thoughts, desires, and actions.

"The great characteristic of a true follower of Christ is *brotherly love*, as you, my dear friends, well know. This Christian affection is beautifully and forcibly described in the 13th chapter of St. Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians. I entreat those who possess a Bible to study this chapter well, and to commit it to memory—try to do so in simplicity, as little children. From this, and many other passages in the Bible, you will find, that the love of our neighbour is a fundamental precept of Christianity. Oh that I were permitted to be the means of establishing this heavenly peace, if only amongst a few. Would that I were able to imprint upon your hearts this new commandment, of love for each other, which our Saviour so often urged upon his disciples, and, consequently, addresses to us.

"There is one other point which I desire to notice. It has been asserted that we have embraced the protestant religion because it is less strict than the Roman catholic, and does not require such close observance of Christian duties. Such an idea could only enter the minds of persons quite ignorant of the truth. It is true, that a Roman catholic, who is uninformed on religious subjects, except as to what his church may have pointed out, when he saw how few *outward ceremonies* the protestant is required to perform, might for a moment suppose the reformed religion, in a worldly point of view, is easier to profess than his own. But the man who only attends to the *outward ceremonies* of a church, without possessing life in his soul, without having his heart influenced by the love of Christ, without looking to him continually as his Redeemer and

only Saviour, without having his soul wholly filled with love to Christ, increasing more and more as he discovers the natural evil of his heart; this man, to whatever denomination of Christians he may belong, is not a living member of the body of Christ, but a withered branch, wholly destitute of fruit. Without a change of heart, or being born again, no man can see the kingdom of God. Our Lord fully explained this great truth in his conversation with Nicodemus; and let us ever remember, that to put off the old man with his affections and lusts, to wrestle with our inward corruptions, is a duty infinitely more difficult to perform, than the observance of all those outward ceremonies, from which Christianity has so deeply suffered."

It is unnecessary to lengthen this extract from the letter written by the Baron de Gemmingen; the piety and Christian affection so apparent throughout, fully prove that his conversion was the result of deep conviction, sent from on high, and untarnished by any worldly motive. The latter part of the extract claims our most serious attention. We cannot but rejoice to see the number increase of those who, with us, enjoy the advantages of the protestant religion; who possess the delightful privilege of searching the Scriptures, and addressing their heavenly Father, without any mediator, except his only beloved Son, whom he has appointed. But should any adopt the protestant religion, thinking it is more accommodating to the weaknesses and the evil propensities of human nature, they will find themselves mistaken, and we would plainly warn them of their error. Our Lord declared there was joy in heaven over *one* sinner that repented, more than over ninety and nine just persons that needed no repentance; and it is no less true, that in the spiritual world the meanest and humblest believer, who has received the gospel of truth, is infinitely more estimable than thousands who have reaped no other advantage from our glorious Reformation than the mere empty name of Protestant. Reader! *Beware of having a name to live, while, in truth, thou art dead!* Rev. iii. 1.

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No. 40.

№ 41

OF THE SERIES OF TRACTS ISSUED BY THE

Baptist General Tract Society.

DIVINE SONGS

FOR CHILDREN.

BY ISAAC WATTS, D. D.

SONG I.

A general Song of Praise to God.

How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky!
How shall a child presume to sing
His awful Majesty?

How great his power is, none can tell,
Nor think how large his grace;
Not men below, nor saints who dwell,
On high, before his face.

Not angels, who stand round the Lord,
Can search his secret will;
But they perform his heavenly word,
And sing his praises still.

Then let me join this holy train,
And my first offerings bring;
Th' eternal God will not disdain
To hear an infant sing.

My heart resolves, my tongue obeys,
And angels will rejoice
To hear their mighty Maker's praise
Sound from a feeble voice.

SONG II.

Praise for Creation and Providence.

I sing th' almighty *power* of God,
Which made the mountains rise;
Which spread the flowing seas abroad,
And built the lofty skies.

I sing the *wisdom* which ordain'd
The sun to rule by day;
The moon shines full at his command,
And all the stars obey.

I sing the *goodness* of the Lord,
Who filled the earth with food;
He formed the creatures by his word,
And then pronounced them good.

Lord, how thy wonders are displayed
Where'er I turn my eye!
If I survey the ground I tread,
Or gaze upon the sky!

There's not a plant nor flower below,
But makes thy glories known;
And clouds arise, and tempests blow,
By order from thy throne.

Creatures (as num'rous as they be)
Are subject to thy care;
There's not a place where we can flee,
But God is present there.

In heaven he shines with beams of love,
With wrath in hell beneath;
'Tis on his earth I stand or move,
And 'tis his air I breathe.

His hand is my perpetual guard,
He keeps me with his eye;
Why do I then forget the Lord,
Who is for ever nigh?

SONG III.

Praise to God for our Redemption by Jesus Christ.

BLEST be the goodness and the power,
The wisdom and the grace,
Which joined in counsel to restore,
And save a ruined race.

Our father ate forbidden fruit,
And from his glory fell;
And we, his children, thus were brought
To death, and near to hell.

Blest be the Lord, who sent his Son,
His mercy to display;
To make his glorious Gospel known,
And point to heaven the way.

Freely he died for us, that we
Might live in bliss above;
And there enjoy, eternally,
The blessings of his love.

Behold him rising from the grave,
Behold him raised on high;
He pleads his merits there, to save
Transgressors doomed to die.

There on a glorious throne he reigns,
And by his power divine,
Redeems us from the slavish chains
Of Satan and of sin.

Thence Jesus will to judgment come,
And with a sovereign voice
Will call, and break up every tomb,
While waking saints rejoice.

O may I then with joy appear
Before the Judge's face;
And with the blest assembly there
Sing God's redeeming grace!

SONG IV.

Praise for Mercies Spiritual and Temporal.

WHENE'ER I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see!
What shall I render to my GOD
For all his gifts to me?

Not more than others I deserve,
Yet God has given me more;
For I have food, while others starve,
Or beg from door to door.

How many children in the street
Half naked I behold!
While I am clothed from head to feet,
And covered from the cold.

While some poor creatures scarce can tell
Where they may lay their head;
I have a home, wherein to dwell,
And rest upon my bed.

While others early learn to swear,
And curse, and lie, and steal,
Lord, I am taught thy name to fear,
And do thy holy will.

Are these thy favours, day by day,
To me above the rest?
Then let me love thee more than they,
And try to serve thee best.

SONG V.

Praise for Birth and Education in a Christian Land.

GREAT God, to thee my voice I raise,
To thee my youngest hours belong;
I would begin my life with praise,
Till growing years improve the song.

'Tis to thy sovereign grace I owe
That I was born on Christian ground;
Where streams of heavenly mercy flow,
And words of sweet salvation sound.

I would not change my native land
For rich Peru, with all her gold;
A nobler prize lies in my hand
Than East or Western Indies hold.

How do I pity those who dwell
Where ignorance with darkness reigns;
They know no heaven, they fear no hell,
Those endless joys, those lasting pains.

Thy glorious promises, O Lord,
Kindle my hope and my desire;
While all the preachers of thy word
Teach me thy goodness to admire.

Thy praise shall still employ my breath,
Since thou hast marked my way to heaven;
Nor will I run the road to death,
And waste the blessings thou hast given.

SONG VI.

Praise for the Gospel.

LORD, I ascribe it to thy grace,
And not to chance, as others do,
That I was born of Christian race,
And not a heathen, or a Jew.

What would the ancient Jewish kings
And Jewish prophets once have given,
Could they have heard those glorious things
Which Christ revealed and brought from heaven?

How glad the heathen would have been,
Who worshipped idols, wood and stone,
If they the book of God had seen,
Or Jesus and his Gospel known!

Then, if this Gospel I refuse,
How shall I e'er lift up my eyes?
For all the Gentiles and the Jews
Against me will in judgment rise.

SONG VII.

The Excellency of the Bible.

GREAT God, with wonder and with praise
On all thy works I look;
But still thy wisdom, power, and grace,
Shine brightest in thy book.

The stars, which in their courses roll,
Have much instruction given;
But thy good word informs my soul
How I may climb to heaven.

The fields provide me food, and show
The goodness of the Lord;
But fruits of life and glory grow
In thy most holy word.

Here are my choicest treasures hid,
Here my best comfort lies,
Here my desires are satisfied,
And hence my hopes arise.

Lord, make me understand thy law;
Show what my faults have been;
And from the Gospel let me draw
Pardon for all my sin.

Here would I learn how Christ has died,
To save my soul from hell;
Not all the books on earth beside
Such heavenly wonders tell.

Then let me love my Bible more,
And take a fresh delight
By day to read these wonders o'er,
And meditate by night.

SONG VIII.

Praise to God for Learning to Read.

THE praises of my tongue
I offer to the Lord,
That I was taught and learnt so young
To read his holy word.

That I was brought to know
The danger I was in;
By nature and by practice too,
A wretched slave to sin.

That I am led to see
I can do nothing well;
And whither shall a sinner flee,
To save himself from hell?

Great God, this book of thine
Informs me where to go
For grace, to pardon all my sin,
And make me holy too.

Here I can read and learn,
How Christ the Son of God
Proclaimed the covenant of thy grace,
And sealed it with his blood.

The Lord, who reigns above,
Hath sent his Spirit down,
To show the wonders of his love,
And make his Gospel known.

O may that Spirit teach,
And make my heart receive,
Those truths which all thy servants preach,
And all thy saints believe.

Then shall I praise the Lord,
In a more cheerful strain,
That I was taught to read his word,
And have not learnt in vain.

SONG IX.

The All-seeing God.

ALMIGHTY God, thy piercing eye
Strikes through the shades of night,
And our most secret actions lie
All open to thy sight.

There's not a sin which we commit,
Nor wicked word we say,
But in thy awful book 'tis writ,
Against the judgment day.

And must the crimes which we have done
Be read and published there;
Be all exposed before the sun,
While men and angels hear!

Lord, at thy feet ashamed I lie;
Upward I dare not look;
Pardon my sins before I die,
And blot them from thy book.

Remember all the dying pains
Which my Redeemer felt;
And let his blood wash out my stains,
And answer for my guilt.

O may I now for ever fear
T' indulge a sinful thought;
Since the great God can see and hear,
And punish every fault.

SONG X.

Solemn Thoughts of God and Death.

THERE is a God, who reigns above,
Lord of the heavens, and earth, and seas,
I fear his wrath, I ask his love,
And with my lips I sing his praise.

There is a law which he has writ,
To teach us all what we must do;
My soul, to his commands submit,
For they are holy, just, and true.

There is a Gospel of rich grace,
Whence sinners all their comforts draw;
Lord, I repent, and seek thy face,
For I have often broke thy law.

There is an hour when I must die,
Nor do I know how soon 'twill come;
A thousand children, young as I,
Are called by death to hear their doom.

Let me improve the hours I have,
Before the day of grace is fled;
There's no repentance in the grave,
Nor pardon offered to the dead.

Just as a tree, cut down, which fell
Northward or southward, there it lies;
So man departs to heaven or hell,
Fixed in the state wherein he dies.

SONG XI.

Heaven and Hell.

THERE is beyond the sky
A heaven of joy and love;
And all good children, when they die,
Go to that world above.

There is a dreadful hell,
And everlasting pains,
Where sinners must with devils dwell,
In darkness, fire, and chains.

Can such a wretch as I
  Escape this dreadful end?
And may I hope, whene'er I die,
  I shall to heaven ascend?

Then will I read and pray,
  While I have life and breath;
Lest I should be cut off to-day,
  And sent t' eternal death.

SONG XII.

The Advantages of Early Religion.

HAPPY the child whose early years
  Receive instruction well;
Who hates the sinner's path, and fears
  The road which leads to hell.

When we devote our youth to God,
  'Tis pleasing in his eyes;
A flower, when offered in the bud,
  Is no vain sacrifice.

'Tis easier work, if we begin
  To serve the Lord betimes;
While sinners who grow old in sin
  Are hardened in their crimes.

'Twill save us from a thousand snares,
  To mind religion young;
Grace will preserve our following years,
  And make our virtue strong.

To thee, Almighty GOD, to thee
  Our childhood we resign;
'Twill please us to look back and see
  That all our lives were thine.

Let the sweet work of prayer and praise
  Employ my youngest breath;
Thus I'm prepared for longer days,
  Or fit for early death.

SONG XIII.

The Danger of Delay.

WHY should I say, " 'Tis yet too soon
To seek for heaven, or think of death?"
A flower may fade before 'tis noon,
And I this day may lose my breath.

If this rebellious heart of mine
Despise the gracious calls of Heaven,
I may be hardened in my sin,
And never have repentance given.

What if the Lord grow wroth, and swear.
While I refuse to read and pray,
That he'll refuse to lend an ear
To all my groans another day!

What if his dreadful anger burn,
While I refuse his offered grace;
And all his love to fury turn,
And strike me dead upon the place!

'Tis dangerous to offend a GOD
Whose power and vengeance none can tell;
One stroke of his almighty rod
Would send young sinners quick to hell.

Then 'twould for ever be in vain
To cry for pardon and for grace;
To wish I had my time again,
Or hope to see my Maker's face.

SONG XIV.

Examples of Early Piety.

WHAT bless'd examples do I find,
Writ in the word of truth,
Of children who began to mind
Religion in their youth!

Jesus, who reigns above the sky,
And keeps the world in awe,
Was once a child as young as I,
And kept his Father's law.

At twelve years old he talked with men,
(The Jews all wondering stand,)
Yet he obeyed his mother then,
And came at her command.

Children a sweet hosanna sung,
And blest their Saviour's name;
They gave him honour with their tongue,
While scribes and priests blaspheme.

Samuel, the child, was weaned, and brought
To wait upon the Lord;
Young *Timothy* betimes was taught
To know his holy word.

Then why do I so long delay
What others learned so soon?
Let me not pass another day
Without this work begun.

SONG XV.

Against Lying.

O 'TIS a lovely thing for youth
To walk betimes in wisdom's way,
To fear a lie, to speak the truth,
That we may trust to all they say.

But liars we can never trust,
Tho' they should speak the thing that's true,
And he who does one fault at first,
And lies to hide it, makes it two.

Have we not known, nor heard, nor read,
How GOD abhors deceit and wrong;
How *Ananias* was struck dead,
Caught with a lie upon his tongue?

So did his wife *Sapphira* die,
When she came in, and grew so bold,
As to confirm that wicked lie
Which just before her husband told.

The Lord delights in them who speak
The words of truth; but every liar
Must have his portion in the lake
Which burns with brimstone and with fire.

Then let me always watch my lips,
Lest I be struck to death and hell;
Since GOD a book of reck'ning keeps
For every lie which children tell.

SONG XVI.

Against Quarrelling and Fighting.

LET dogs delight to bark and bite,
For GOD hath made them so;
Let bears and lions growl and fight,
For 'tis their nature to.

But, children, you should never let
Such angry passions rise;
Your little hands were never made
To tear each other's eyes.

Let love through all your actions run,
And all your words be mild;
Live like the blessed Virgin's Son,
That sweet and lovely Child.

His soul was gentle as a lamb;
And as his stature grew,
He grew in favour both with man
And GOD, his Father, too.

Now, Lord of all, he reigns above,
And from his heavenly throne
He sees what children dwell in love,
And marks them for his own.

SONG XVII.

Love between Brothers and Sisters

WHATEVER brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home;
Where sisters dwell and brothers meet,
Quarrels should never come.

Birds in their little nests agree,
And 'tis a shameful sight,
When children of one family
Fall out, and chide, and fight.

Hard names at first, and threatening words.
  Which are but noisy breath,
May grow to clubs, and naked swords;
  To murder, and to death.

The devil tempts one mother's son
  To rage against another;
So wicked *Cain* was hurried on,
  Till he had killed his brother.

The wise will make their anger cool,
  At least before 'tis night;
But in the bosom of a fool
  It burns till morning light.

Pardon, O Lord, our childish rage,
  Our little brawls remove;
That, as we grow to riper age,
  Our hearts may all be love.

SONG XVIII.

Against Scoffing and Calling Names.

Our tongues were made to bless the Lord,
  And not speak ill of men;
When others give a railing word,
  We must not rail again.

Cross words and angry names require
  To be chastised at school;
And he's in danger of hell fire,
  Who calls his brother, fool.

But lips which dare be so profane,
  To mock, and jeer, and scoff
At holy things, or holy men,
  The Lord will cut them off.

When children, in their wanton play,
  Served old *Elisha* so,
And bid the prophet go his way,
  "*Go up, thou bald-head, go!*"

God quickly stopped their wicked breath,
  And sent two raging bears,
Which tore them limb from limb, to death,
  With blood, and groans, and tears.

Great God, how terrible art thou
To sinners, e'er so young!
Grant me thy grace, and teach me how
To tame and rule my tongue.

SONG XIX.

Against Swearing and taking God's Name in vain.

Angels, that high in glory dwell,
Adore thy name, Almighty God;
And devils tremble, down in hell,
Beneath the terrors of thy rod.

And yet, how wicked children dare
Abuse thy dreadful, glorious name!
And, when they're angry, how they swear,
And curse their fellows, and blaspheme.

How will they stand before thy face,
Who treated thee with such disdain;
While thou shalt doom them to the place
Of everlasting fire and pain!

Then, never will one cooling drop
To quench their burning tongues be given;
But I will praise thee here, and hope
Thus to employ my tongue in heaven.

My heart shall be in pain to hear
Wretches affront the Lord above:
'Tis that great God, whose power I fear,
That heavenly Father, whom I love.

If my companions grow profane,
I'll leave their friendship, when I hear
Young sinners take thy name in vain,
And learn to curse, and learn to swear.

SONG XX.

Against Idleness and Mischief.

How doth the little busy bee
Improve each shining hour;
And gather honey all the day
From every opening flower!

How skilfully she builds her cell,
How neat she spreads her wax;
And labours hard to store it well
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labour, or of skill,
I would be busy too;
For Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthful play,
Let my first years be past,
That I may give, for every day,
Some good account at last.

SONG XXI.

Against Evil Company.

WHY should I join with those in play
In whom I've no delight;
Who curse and swear, but never pray;
Who call ill names and fight.

I hate to hear a wanton song,
Their words offend my ears;
I should not dare defile my tongue
With language such as theirs.

Away from fools I'll turn my eyes,
Nor with the scoffers go;
I would be walking with the wise,
That wiser I may grow.

From one rude boy, that's used to mock,
Ten learn the wicked jest;
One sickly sheep infects the flock,
And poisons all the rest.

My GOD, I hate to walk or dwell
With sinful children here;
Then let me not be sent to hell,
Where none but sinners are.

SONG XXII.

Against Pride in Clothes.

WHY should our garments, made to hide
Our parents' shame, provoke our pride?
The art of dress did not begin
Till Eve, our mother, learned to sin.

When first she put her covering on,
Her robe of innocence was gone;
And yet her children vainly boast
In the sad marks of glory lost.

How proud we are! How fond to show
Our clothes, and call them rich and new;
When the poor sheep and silk-worm wore
That very clothing long before.

The tulip and the butterfly
Appear in gayer coats than I;
Let me be dressed fine as I will,
Flies, worms, and flowers, exceed me still.

Then will I set my heart to find
Inward adornings of the mind;
Knowledge and virtue, truth and grace,
These are the robes of richest dress.

No more shall worms with me compare,
This is the raiment angels wear;
The Son of GOD, when here below,
Put on this best apparel too.

It never fades, it ne'er grows old,
Nor fears the rain, nor moth, nor mould;
It takes no spot, but still refines;
The more 'tis worn, the more it shines.

In this on earth would I appear,
Then go to heaven and wear it there;
GOD will approve it in his sight,
'Tis his own work, and his delight.

SONG XXIII.

Obedience to Parents.

LET children, who would fear the Lord,
Hear what their teachers say;
With reverence meet their parents' word,
And with delight obey.

Have we not heard what dreadful plagues
Are threatened by the Lord
To him who breaks his father's law,
Or mocks his mother's word?

What heavy guilt upon him lies?
How cursed is his name?
The ravens shall pick out his eyes,
And eagles eat the same.

But those who worship God, and give
Their parents honour due,
Here on this earth they long shall live,
And live hereafter too.

SONG XXIV.

A Morning Song.

MY GOD, who mak'st the sun to know
His proper hour to rise,
And to give light to all below,
Dost send him round the skies.

When from the chambers of the east
His morning race begins,
He never tires nor stops to rest,
But round the world he shines.

So, like the sun, would I fulfil
The business of the day;
Begin my work betimes, and still
March on my heavenly way.

Give me, O Lord, thy early grace,
Nor let my soul complain,
That the young morning of my days
Has all been spent in vain.

SONG XXV.

An Evening Song.

AND now another day is gone,
I'll sing my Maker's praise;
My comforts every hour make known
His providence and grace.

But how my childhood runs to waste!
My sins, how great their sum!
Lord, give me pardon for the past,
And strength for days to come.

I lay my body down to sleep;
Let angels guard my head;
And through the hours of darkness keep
Their watch around my bed.

With cheerful heart I close my eyes,
Since thou wilt not remove;
And in the morning let me rise,
Rejoicing in thy love.

SONG XXVI.

For the Lord's Day Morning.

THIS is the day when Christ arose
So early from the dead;
Why should I keep my eyelids closed,
And waste my hours in bed?

This is the day when Jesus broke
The powers of death and hell;
And shall I still wear Satan's yoke,
And love my sins so well?

To-day with pleasure Christians meet,
To pray and read thy word;
And I will go with cheerful feet
To learn thy will, O Lord.

I'll leave my sport to read and pray,
And so prepare for heaven;
O may I love this blessed day,
The best of all the seven.

SONG XXVII.

For the Lord's Day Evening

LORD, how delightful 'tis to see
A whole assembly worship Thee!
At once they sing, at once they pray;
They hear of heaven, and learn the way.

I have been there, and still would go;
'Tis like a little heaven below;
Not all my pleasures and my play
Shall tempt me to forget this day.

O write upon my memory, Lord,
The texts and doctrines of thy word;
That I may break thy laws no more,
But love thee better than before.

With thoughts of Christ and things divine
Fill up this foolish heart of mine;
That hoping pardon through his blood,
I may lie down, and wake with GOD.

SONG XXVIII.

The Ant, or Emmet.

THESE emmets, how little they are in our eyes!
We tread them to dust, and a troop of them dies,
Without our regard or concern:
Yet as wise as we are, if we went to their school,
There's many a sluggard, and many a fool,
Some lesson of wisdom might learn.

They wear not their time out in sleeping or play,
But gather up corn in a sun-shiny day,
And for winter they lay up their stores;
They manage their work in such regular forms,
One would think they foresaw all the frosts and the storms,
And so brought their food within doors.

But I have less sense than a poor creeping ant,
If I take not due care for the things I shall want,
Nor provide against dangers in time;
When death or old age shall once stare in my face,
What a wretch shall I be in the end of my days,
If I trifle away all their prime!

Now, now while my strength and my youth are in bloom,
Let me think what shall serve me when sickness shall come,
And pray that my sins be forgiven.
Let me read in good books, and believe, and obey,
That when death turns me out of this cottage of clay,
I may dwell in a palace in heaven.

SONG XXIX.

Good Resolutions.

THOUGH I'm now in younger days,
Nor can tell what shall befall me,
I'll prepare for every place
Where my growing age shall call me.

Should I e'er be rich or great,
Others shall partake my goodness;
I'll supply the poor with meat,
Never showing scorn or rudeness.

When I see the blind or lame,
Deaf or dumb, I'll kindly treat them:
I deserve to feel the same,
If I mock, or hurt, or cheat them.

If I meet with railing tongues,
Why should I return them railing?
Since I best revenge my wrongs
By my patience never failing.

When I hear them telling lies,
Talking foolish, cursing, swearing,
First I'll try to make them wise,
Or I'll soon go out of hearing.

What though I be low and mean,
I'll engage the rich to love me,
While I'm modest, neat, and clean,
And submit when they reprove me.

If I should be poor and sick,
I shall meet, I hope, with pity;
Since I love to help the weak,
Though they're neither fair nor witty.

I'll not willingly offend,
  Nor be easily offended;
What's amiss I'll strive to mend,
  And endure what can't be mended.

May I be so watchful still
  O'er my humours and my passion,
As to speak and do no ill,
  Though it should be all the fashion.

Wicked fashions lead to hell;
  Ne'er may I be found complying;
But in life behave so well,
  Not to be afraid of dying.

SONG XXX.

Cradle Hymn.

Hush, my dear, lie still and slumber,
  Holy angels guard thy bed!
Heavenly blessings without number
  Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,
  House and home, thy friends provide,
And, without thy care or payment,
  All thy wants are well supplied.

How much better thou art tended
  Than the Son of God could be,
When from heaven he descended,
  And became a child like thee!

Soft and easy is thy cradle:
  Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay,
When his birth-place was a stable,
  And his softest bed was hay.

Blessed babe! what glorious features;
  Spotless, fair, divinely bright!
Must He dwell with brutal creatures?
  How could angels bear the sight?

Was there nothing but a manger,
Cursed sinners could afford,
To receive the heavenly stranger?
Did they thus affront the Lord?

Soft, my child, I did not chide thee,
Though my song might sound too hard:
'Tis thy mother* sits beside thee,
And her arms shall be thy guard.

Yet to read the shameful story,
How the Jews abused their King,
How they served the Lord of glory,
Makes me angry while I sing.

See the kinder shepherds round him,
Telling wonders from the sky!
Where they sought him, there they found him,
With his Virgin Mother by.

See the lovely babe a-dressing;
Lovely infant, how he smiled!
When he wept, the mother's blessing
Soothed and hush'd the holy child.

Lo, he slumbers in the manger,
Where the horned oxen fed;
Peace, my darling, here's no danger,
There's no ox a-near thy bed.

'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,
Save my dear from burning flame,
Bitter groans, and endless crying,
That thy blest Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear him,
Trust and love him all thy days;
Then go dwell for ever near him,
See his face, and sing his praise!

I could give thee thousand kisses,
Hoping what I most desire;
Not a mother's fondest wishes
Can to greater joys aspire.

* Here you may use the word *brother, sister, neighbour,* &c.

SONG XXXI.

Summer Evening.

How fine has the day been! How bright was the sun!
How lovely and joyful the course that he run!
Though he rose in a mist, when his race he begun,
And there followed some droppings of rain.
But now the fair traveller's come to the west,
His rays are all gold, and his beauties are best;
He paints the sky gay, as he sinks to his rest,
And foretels a bright rising again.

Just such is the Christian. His course he begins
Like the sun in a mist, while he mourns for his sins,
And melts into tears. Then he breaks out and shines,
And travels his heavenly way.
But when he comes nearer to finish his race,
Like a fine setting sun, he looks richer in grace,
And gives a sure hope, at the end of his days,
Of rising in brighter array.

SONG XXXII.

The Child's Complaint.

Why should I love my sport so well;
So constant at my play;
And lose the thoughts of heaven and hell,
And then forget to pray?

What do I read my Bible for,
But, Lord, to learn thy will?
And shall I daily know thee more,
And less obey thee still?

How senseless is my heart, and wild!
How vain are all my thoughts!
Pity the weakness of a child,
And pardon all my faults.

Make me thy heavenly voice to hear,
And let me love to pray;
Since God will lend a gracious ear
To what a child can say.

SONG XXXIII.

Death and Resurrection.

THE winter past, reviving flowers
Anew shall paint the plain;
The woods shall hear the voice of spring,
And flourish green again.

Shall man depart this earthly scene,
Ah, never to return!
No second spring of life revive
The ashes of the urn!

Shall life revisit dying worms,
And spread the insect's wing;
And oh! shall man awake no more,
The Saviour's name to sing?

Cease, all ye vain desponding fears;
When Christ from darkness sprang,
Death, the last foe, was captive led,
And heaven with praises rang.

The trump shall sound; the gates of death
Shall make his children way;
From the cold tomb the slumb'rers spring,
And shine in endless day.

SONG XXXIV.

Heaven.

HIGH in yonder realms of light
Dwell the raptured saints above,
Far beyond our feeble sight,
Happy in Immanuel's love.

'Mid the chorus of the skies,
'Mid th' angelic lyres above,
Hark, their songs melodious rise,
Songs of praise to Jesus' love.

Every tear is wiped away,
Sighs no more shall heave the breast;
Night is lost in endless day;
Sorrow—in eternal rest!

☞ Tracts may be obtained at the Society's Depository, Philadelphia, and of its Agents in various parts of the United States.

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